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Issue #70 February 1997

Common Ground

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Environmental
& Peace activist

DAVID ORCHARD
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out of Canada

AVALANCHE
Surviving nature's fury

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Interview with
STEPHEN LEVINE

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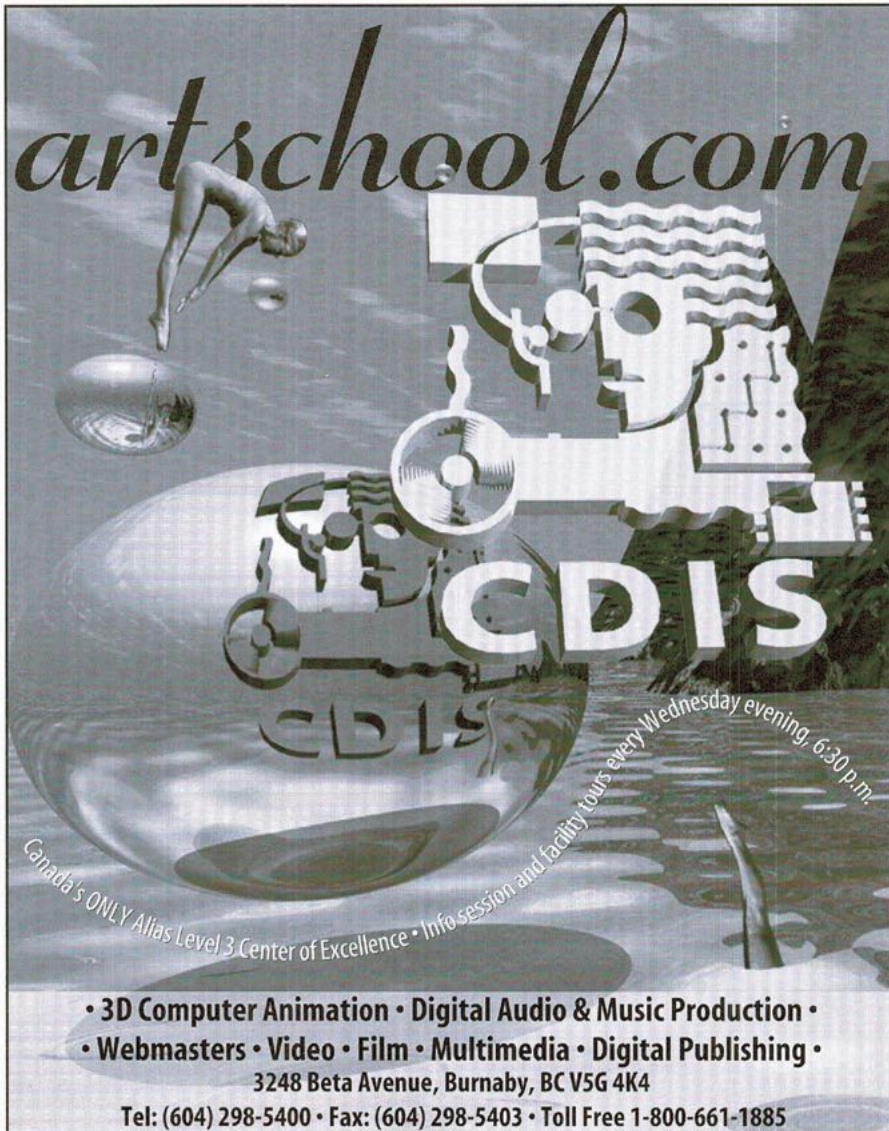
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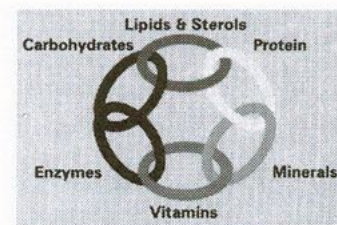
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Let us make 1997 the year in which we give top priority to our spiritual goal

By Rajinder Singh

As we enter the new year, it is important to take stock of where we stand and set new goals. Having a goal in mind is the first step towards its attainment.

Rather than live our lives as if adrift in a sea, cast about from shore to shore aimlessly, it is far better to set our compass for our destination and move steadily in a conscious manner towards the completion of our journey. Once we set our goal, we can analyze the small steps that we need to take towards its attainment. With a goal in mind, we can then structure our daily lives, setting priorities to make time to work towards our goal, and ensure its attainment.

We may have many goals in the physical, mental and spiritual arenas of our life. As human beings, we must give time and attention to our body, mind and soul. But in doing so, we often are pulled by the world to give more time and attention to our body and mind.

We need to have balance in our lives. Too often we neglect the spiritual side, and when we give it last priority, too many days pass by with that side being ignored.

Let us make 1997 the year in which we give top priority to our spiritual goal. The number of years each of us has left is continually getting less and less. Just as people worry about how many years of earning they have left to build their retirement funds, we should think about how many years we have left to accumulate spiritual capital to attain God-

realization in this lifetime.

That spiritual capital is accumulated by the number of hours we spend in accurate, regular meditation, selfless service, and keeping our diary as a tool to develop ethically. Each day that passes in which we forget our meditation, service, and ethical development is one day less towards the attainment of our spiritual goal.

So let us keep meditation, ethical living, and selfless service as our goal and our top priority in our daily life. In this way, the small steps we take will bring us closer to our goal.

It is said that slow and steady wins the race. If we think that we can make a last-ditch cram at our final hours and reach our goal, we are mistaken. By setting our sail for our destination and each day moving slowly and steadily across the ocean of life, we will ensure our success.

Rajinder Singh is the grandson and successor in the lineage of Sant Kirpal Singh, and an internationally recognized expert teacher of meditation. He was elected President of the World Fellowship of Religions and heads the Science Spirituality, a non-profit, non-denominational organization with over 300,000 members worldwide. His previous books include "Vision for Spiritual Unity and Peace," "Education for a Peaceful World" and "Ecology of the Soul." Local contacts for information: in B.C. (604) 985-5840; in Washington (360) 371-5560.

E D I T O R I A L

Walk in Peace, June

This afternoon I was told that a dear friend, June Black, was struck and killed by a car while walking across Granville Street. Many are saddened and moved by her passing.

If you knew June, a lifelong peace and environmental activist here in Vancouver, you will know why we are publishing our tribute to her. Even if you had never met her, please read the tribute and letter written by some of her closest friends (see page 35) to catch a glimpse of this remarkable person and what we can do together to further her work. You will also find a poem written by June entitled "The Car And The Tree," her impassioned plea to all of us to "cherish trees instead of cars."

June was a fan of David Orchard, always calling up to let us know when he

was giving a talk. She particularly admired his deep commitment to protecting Canada. In honour of June's dedication to anti-nuclear work, we are also publishing David's current article about U.S. and Canadian government plans to bury U.S. nuclear waste in Canada (see page 42).

May June's spirit and commitment to make this world a better place continue to inspire more people to rededicate themselves to peace, love, social justice and respect for our planet.

June Black, wherever you now go, may you be greeted with love by those who got there before you, and know that you are loved by those who have stayed behind to carry on your work.

And may you always Walk in Peace.
— Joseph Roberts, Publisher

Embracing the Beloved

"If you aspire to transform an intimate relationship into a tandem inner journey towards spiritual realization, *Embracing the Beloved* is the most subtly articulated 'how to' book available."—Ram Dass

An Interview with Stephen Levine by Galen Brandt Wootten

Stephen and Ondrea Levine have devoted their eighteen-year marriage to investigating the mind/body relationship, particularly as it relates to healing, dying, and grieving. Their work, as described in their books *Who Dies?*, *Healing Into Life and Death*, and *Guided Meditations: Explorations and Healing*, has affected healing and medical practices worldwide.

Seven years ago, after their third child left home, they moved together into the deep woods, living in almost complete seclusion, to explore what has become their most profound path to healing and "our most significant spiritual commitment—our own relationship." In their recent book, *Embracing The Beloved*, they demonstrate how to use relationship as a means for profound inner growth and healing, and a path of awakening the body, mind, heart and spirit.



Ondrea and Stephen Levine embracing the Beloved.

Common Ground: How did your partner become your practice?

Stephen Levine: Relationship is like living with a Zen master. Any place you're going to get caught, you will. Any place that's sticky, the little emotional iron filings will cling to. We are reactive in relationship to our partner. When my heart closes, it doesn't just tell me that my partner did something that closed me; it shows me the true nature of the closed heart, and how quickly clouds can cover the sun.

CG: How can we practice a conscious relationship which opens the heart?

SL: Conscious relationship has to do with two people being conscious of what blocks it. When your priority is clarity and kindness, instead of control and competition, you have a conscious relationship. It doesn't mean that all the top forty blockages of the heart don't arise. But they arise in a willingness for them not to; you don't use them as barricades from which to snipe at your partner.

CG: What are the stages of conscious relationship?

SL: First it's watching, then looking, then seeing, then just being. The first stage is the meeting of bodies—very physical, very biochemical. You're watching your partner from a place of considerable separation. You're defining separation: I am here, I do this; they do that. You look at each other like an overstuffed chair: Will I be comfortable in that chair? How long can I sit in that chair? It's when you start thinking, I need to reupholster that chair, that the other person is in trouble.

CG: How long does that take?

SL: People talk about going crazy with love. It's true—a chemical similar to endorphins is released when we fall in love, similar to our response to intense pain. We have about a two year period of being chemically attracted. Then that chemistry changes. In the same way, if you have physical pain, your endorphins will kick in and help balance it. But as

anyone who's ever been in longterm physical pain knows, at a certain point, your exhaustion is so great that even the endorphins can't overwhelm the numbing.

CG: And the second stage?

SL: It's the meeting of minds. All of a sudden, you're not just living in the chair; you're living in the person's whole room. You're not just sitting on their cushions; you're breathing their air, smelling their food, seeing their colors. Your hearing starts to open. All your senses are involved.

Watching the other person is not an act of seeing; it's an act of thinking. But because you have a connection, even in the watching stage, there are still moments, in looking across the dinner table at the other person as the Other, that watching falls away. You notice how comfortable that is, when you can just see and feel the other person, not "think" them.

Then you start looking, actually

experiencing that other person. You're not watching their eyes; you're looking into their eyes. There are moments of just seeing, actually receiving that person. Because the relationship is appropriate for your heart, you keep moving into those moments; you cultivate them, stay open to them. Instead of watching those moments, you start to actually experience them. Which means levels and levels of trust, which dissolves boundaries.

That's a serious relationship: when you've gone past the gravity of your natural, karmic, or chemical attraction, past the momentum of attraction that is below levels of awareness. When your relationship comes more into awareness, when you're really trying to find a meeting of the minds, that's lovely. But here's the shadow: at that point, each person is trying to carve out a territory of "this is who I am."

CG: Why is that?

SL: Relationship evolution parallels spiritual evolution. You have to be someone before you can be no one. It's true in the mind; it's true in the heart. You have to establish the ground from which you let go, clear away the psychological debris to see the light. You won't relate wholeheartedly to yourself unless you have a point to relate to and a point to relate from. Eventually those both dissolve, and you're just floating in being.

CG: And the third stage?

SL: One gets a sense of the workability, that this could last a lifetime. You almost come to the angelic realm, where you see that there is something profoundly possible in the surrender and commitment to another human being—in the full embrace, the non-withheld, unconditional embrace. It sounds easier than it is. At that level, your relationship starts to become a laboratory in which you begin cooking away that which causes life to be difficult and has caused every previous relationship to fall away.

You're in a place of seeing, and all of a sudden you realize—and this is one of the great profound insights of anybody's spiritual experience—that what you have

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been looking for your whole life is that which is looking. You find yourself and that other person in that same spaciousness, and that spaciousness is being.

CG: Then you rest in that being.

SL: As often as the karmic winds allow. Lastly, in the fourth stage, you start to enter the Mystery together. You look into each other's eyes and all you can see is the Beloved. All you feel is the Beloved—the Beloved who was always there. The real connection with that other

person is innate; it was there before you were born. And what is experienced is the healing we took birth for. That which obscures our natural being falls away. You're not picking anything up; you're letting things go. We're seeing who we could be, who we actually are under all this confusion.

CG: What is "the Beloved?"

SL: The term comes from many devotional spiritual practices. The Beloved could be referred to simply as God.

In deeper traditions, it is referred to as the Mystery, that of which God is composed. Traditionally one speaks of uniting with the Beloved in oneself, uniting with God, the Mystery, or deeper levels of consciousness in oneself. In embracing the Beloved, we are speaking of uniting with God, or more deeply, with the Mystery within your partner. If you can find your partner's essence, you have found your own.

CG: How is that so?

SL: You can use your partner as a crystal ball to see what obscures and what frees the heart, what qualities of mind take us deeper, what qualities keep us superficial. When you and your partner don't meet, when your hearts don't meet, the object is not to see whose heart is stronger or who wins, but to lament together that so little can block so much, and to go on past holdings. A relationship and a monastery are no different. The work and the processes are the same: acknowledgment, recognition, letting go, opening to what is in the Mystery, discovery. If we could go backwards and see it from who we actually are, the enormity of what people might call the light, and see what happens to us, see the layers upon layers, the oblique passings over the heart that dull the light, we would be lying on the floor in paroxysms of grief, to realize that every moment of self is a moment of loss of our most extraordinary gift, the inheritance of being, of the vast underlying suchness that we call the deathless. The deeper the experience of the sense of being, the more effulgent the experience of unconditional love.

CG: So the path to unconditional love is the path of "unconditioning"?

SL: It's to watch conditioning, and not be attached to it—let it come, let it go, see what that all means. You don't have to do anything to create unconditional love except let go of the conditionings that block it. Once the hearts are separated, as they are off and on in a relationship, you notice you'll go through all four stages—first you're watching, then looking, then seeing and receiving from the other person,

and then you are one. It is amazing, when you look at the human heart, how closed it can be one moment, and how open it can be the next. No wonder we're so tired at the end of the day; all this liking and disliking just wears us out.

CG: What is love?

SL: Love is a state of being. Love and pure awareness are the same experience. We call them by different terms, but they create the same state of mind: kindness, compassion, openness,

generosity. Love is the only rational act of a lifetime.

CG: What's the difference between love and romance?

SL: Love is commitment. Love is, I give you my heart. Romance is, I'd like a little of your heart. Romance, being physical, even mental/physical, doesn't have enough depth. Some people would die for romance. But in a sense, it's very easy to take a bullet—very theatrical. How about taking the moment-to-moment times when she's in PMS, or when he's lost his job and his self-esteem is so low that he's becoming hateful?

To the degree you surrender past your defenses, past your knowing, to become vulnerable to the truth, to the enormity of being, that's where the real insight, the sudden wordless understandings arise. In romance, you're still buying flowers to give another. In love, you're growing flowers, and you don't need to cut them. When your beloved passes, they say, Ahhh, roses remind me of God.

CG: That's moving from the romantic to the "harmonic"?

SL: The romantic has to do with magnetism, with magnetic energy. The harmonic has to do with a less dense form of energy than magnetism. Magnetism attracts the iron filings. Harmony is the relationship between the molecules of iron and the molecules of oxygen. Harmony is a much deeper sine wave than romance. Romance is two bodies bumping against each other; harmony is two hearts beating in rhythm.

CG: It's opening your heart to everything in yourself and in your partner—

even resentments, fears, grief.

SL: If you don't have room for resentment, you don't have room for relationship. When you first notice resentment in a relationship and say, Oh, this one isn't working either, the truth is, No, you're not working either. It is to be expected that two desire systems will conflict.

You and I wake up in the morning. I say, I want a red one. You say, I want a red one, too. Next morning you say, I want a blue one. I say, I want a yellow one. Resentment arises. No self. Nothing personal. Just the state of evolution at which we find ourselves.

Well, we can just stay in the mud, come up on land once in a while to breathe, or we can drag ourselves out of the sea and stand erect and become human beings. It's a lot harder to be a human being in a relationship than it is even to be a saint in the world. Relationship is the most difficult yoga available—and some of the most precious. How many yogis, how many spiritual teachers, do we see in relationship? Damn few. Because it takes a lot of time. Relationship in itself is a whole practice.

CG: When we conflict, how can we keep our hearts open?

SL: By relating mindfully to the nature of desire. It becomes *the* desire instead of my desire and your desire. You go from the personal to the universal.

CG: How do the guided meditations in your book help us?

SL: Without some kind of daily going inside to listen to and speak with the heart, to address the mind with simple awareness, I don't know how any relationship lasts. After about six months of practicing sitting meditation every day, relating *to* the mind instead of *from* it, you find a very different relationship to the mind arising. Cultivating a general awareness of what's going on when it's going on is incredibly precious in relationship.

When you meditate together each morning, you start with a common frame of reference that's quite extraordinary. A general mindfulness, the availability of a simple clarity, arises more often, naturally, spontaneously, throughout the day. As you share that, your trust in the other's insights grows. There's an extraordinary organic evolution to relationship when you allow it.

Develop the practice of softening your belly, letting go of the muscles of the belly, softening and softening. See where you're holding. Where you're holding there's separation. Letting go is softening. Softening the muscles. Softening the tissue. Softening to the center of each cell. Levels and levels of softening. Levels and levels of letting go. Whenever our heart is closed, whenever the armouring of the heart is displayed, it can be directly experienced and melted through access to the hardness in the belly.

All that holding, all that tension in the body is unresolved grief. When you really commit, you're accepting the reservoir of grief that each person carries. If you're not willing to open to your partner's pain, you're not willing to open to your partner. Your distance from your own unattended grief is your distance from your partner. If you open to your

grief, you will find under it an ocean of love beyond your wildest dreams. In mindful awareness, in the change from relating *from* our sadness to relating *to* our sadness, is the change from the personal to the universal. Responsible *for* my pain, I am the cause of the suffering of the universe; there's no room in my heart for anything. Responsible *for*

creates I and other; it's all boundaries. But responsible *to* my pain? Responsible *to* my beloved's fear or anxiety or grief? I have the whole universe to bring to that. There's no boundary. Nothing will connect two people more than being honest about their separateness. The more we're guarded, the more we can't be trusted; the more we fear the other.

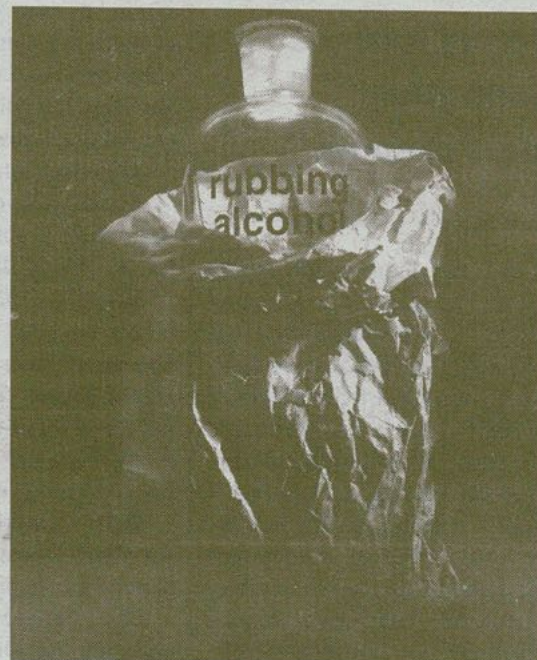
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CG: Why do we fear each other? Do you fear Ondrea?

SL: The more we love someone, the more scared we are of them, because no one has our self-image in the palm of their hand like our partner. I fear Ondrea

"If you open to your grief, you will find under it an ocean of love beyond your wildest dreams."

might not love me, that I might not be acceptable in her eyes. It's the same relationship as our relationship to God: we fear Judgment Day. Because we don't take ourselves wholeheartedly within, if we get the least glimpse that another is not doing it either, we get really scared.

CG: How can we embrace our fear?

SL: There's nothing to fear in fear. Fear is just a state of mind, a body pattern. Some fears are very reasonable. They say: Look out—that's an avalanche heading toward you. But 99% of our fears are not about physical survival;

they're about survival of that painful self-image that we lug around with us like a weeping beast.

We can start by admitting the fear. You can look at this other person and see, Here's someone who's as afraid of me as I am of them. Having the heart open does not depend on fear being absent from the mind; it depends on not identifying with the fear. It's relating to the fear, not from the fear. When you have cultivated an open heart and a clear awareness, you can have fear in the mind and not be at all afraid. In fact, you could be in almost ecstatic joy that so much old blockage could arise and not obscure the heart in any way. Joy will present itself when you can do that without force.

CG: How long did that take you?

SL: I'll tell you when I can do it. I've only been practicing forty years, you know. This is all hearsay.

When we make romantic choices below the level of awareness, we often choose a person who makes us feel safe. But it usually takes away that which makes us feel the most safe, which is the recognition and direct experience of our own enormous inner power.

CG: Is Ondrea the "perfect" person for you? Does a perfect relationship depend on finding the perfect person?

SL: I believe absolutely, completely and truly that Ondrea could not be with anybody better than I, and she believes

absolutely the same: I could not be with anybody better than she. Not because we're perfect, but because we are absolutely the best person, the perfect person, for each other in the world.

Perfectionists are those incapable of seeing perfection, or they'd see it around them moment to moment. If we cannot see the perfection of this moment, now, what makes us think we will recognize it later? Perfection exists; it just doesn't last. You can have perfect moments with your partner—even perfect weeks.

CG: But then you start judging those moments, judging your partner.

SL: Judge not lest you be judged. The judging mind does not know the difference between you and the guy next to you. If you encourage it to judge another, it will soon turn to you and say, You know, you're an asshole, too. So any kind of judgment is gonna burn.

CG: How does your relationship heal you?

SL: In so many ways. More than anything, it has deepened the levels of consciousness that are readily available. I don't have to sit in a meditation hall for two weeks to hit certain places.

Our main priority when we met was growth. We saw in each other an option available that had never been available before: a room in which to grow. It's the kind of love that says: Nothing is worth the heart being closed a moment longer.

If you said to us, What would be your one wish?, for both of us, it would be the same thing: deeper and deeper levels of consciousness. I am more interested in my essential joy than I am in my acquired happiness. So is Ondrea. And we sometimes have to struggle past ancient holdings and disappointments. That very struggle is so healthy. Resistance to resistance ends not in more resistance; you notice your resistance, you notice your hardening, and you soften.

If your partner is the most important thing in your life, they're in trouble, and you're in trouble. If they're the most important person in your life, that's wonderful. But the truth has to be the most important thing in your life or else you will never have a substantial relationship. You will always be twisting yourself into the shape of the key that you think will fit the lock that keeps your partner's heart closed to you. You are constantly not being yourself so as to be loved, and then you wonder, Where does this self-hatred come from?

One should go into relationship with the idea of it as a yoga—a union, a yoke, a practice. If you're going into a relationship to make you happy, you're probably going to make the other person unhappy. If you're going into relationship to find the joy, the healing you were born for, two people who really want to get well can display a lot of unhealthiness with

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each other and have it run through the heart instead of get stuck in the mind.

CG: Some people may think, This is exhausting—all this watching, seeing, practice. When do I get to relax with my partner, have some fun?

SL: The irony of spiritual practice is the effort it takes to become effortless. It's like somebody saying, How long do I have to dig this hole before I get water? Well, you can stop anytime. See what happens when you stop: you die of thirst. Or you can say, as many people do in relationships, I'll just dig a hole here. Nope, I dug down five feet, I didn't find any water, I'll dig another one over here—and you jump from relationship to relationship. You dig a lot of shallow wells and all you're gonna get is dirt. If you use all that energy in one relationship, you get water.

CG: In the laboratory of your relationship, you've experimented with using your relationship to actually, physically heal one another: Ondrea of cancer and lupus, you of chronic back pain and kidney stones. And you've been successful.

SL: Yes, our relationship is physically healing. If you're looking at something on the horizon with one eye, you can make out its details, but you can't tell how far away it is. You have to have two eyes: you need perspective to see not only what something looks like, but your distance from it and the path between you and it.

CG: Is this what you mean by "triangulation?"

SL: Yes; it's when two people come together and view together, focus together. When one person focuses on their headache, quite a bit can be done. But imagine when the greatest intent of the person next to you is that you be free from suffering, that you get the most out of your moment possible. What an extraordinary environment in which to heal. Everything encourages you to be well.

Suppose today you went to a doctor who said you had six months left to live. If I said to you, Write down all the reasons you don't want to die, there'd be a thousand: all the things you'd like to see happen, all the dreams come true. Then if I said, Why, beyond your wildest dreams, beyond anything you expected, was there some feeling of relief in knowing you only had to live six more months? You'd write down all of the reasons you want to get out of your life, away from your pain and suffering.

When you're with someone who wholeheartedly is taking you within, those reasons have much less potential for blocking healing. Your own natural healing is reinforced, even potentiated by another's intention being in the same place, in the same willingness to learn from the unpleasant—not just escape, but

learn. Love is the optimum strategy for healing.

SCG: How does this relate to your upcoming book, *One Year To Live*?

SL: The book is about how to live the next year as if it were your last. It deals with the three main regrets we hear on people's deathbeds. The first has to do with relationship, the second with their job, and the third with their lifestyle.

CG: What are the regrets about relationship?

SL: Just exactly what we've been talking about: they've haven't paid enough attention; they've let too much unfinished business accumulate. Such shame and anger comes up around relationship that people think it's too big a can of worms to open when their energy is so low on their deathbed. It's a perfect example of how we cannot wait to finish our life in what turns out to be the actual last

year, because we may not have enough energy, concentration, or physical sense of wellbeing to be able to sit through difficult places. If you're going to have a last year to live, you'd better start it today.

CG: How can I start today to embrace the Beloved?

SL: Start by seeking your true nature. Begin by reading the books of others who are seeking as well: the saints, and so many people who are in the same boat as us all, trying to practice, finding it difficult to practice, discovering what makes it a little easier, or makes it a little deeper, or allows it to sustain and access love more readily.

CG: And if I can open to my true nature, then I can open to yours?

SL: Yes, because it isn't my true nature, it's *the* true nature. There is only one Beloved. We all share it.

CG: And we all are it.

SL: Yes. What can be terrifying to people is that in truth, that's all we are. This other stuff—personality, skin color, name, education, being able to speak or not speak, walk or not walk, see or not see—is so superficial. The enormity of the sun, the billions and billions of tons of chemical energy, all that light can be blocked by just turning your face away from it. But it doesn't affect the nature of the sun.

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Three Men
In Bow Canyon
Engulfed By
Nature's Fury

AVALANCHE!

A First-Person Survival Account

By Scott C. Berry



I can remember that night after the avalanche, being in the shelter, drowning in an ocean of diverse feelings, wondering what the next day would hold. The night before, I had been in a cheap but cozy hotel room in Lake Louise with my brother Jon and my friend Rene.

We were anticipating a day of virgin powder and untracked trails. I envisioned us in the Bow Hut the following night, but this was not to be. We joked with our usual repartee. That night I slept well.

The next day we awoke to some light-falling snow and a sharp crispness that foretold of frozen valleys, crackling trees and glistening peaks. We cooked ourselves a quick breakfast in the basement of the hotel. The sky was just beginning to lighten, beckoning us to winter adventures.

After engineering our packs, skis and bodies into Rene's eastern-built compact, we hopped over to the warden's office for the information we needed about weather conditions and avalanche activity. We found ourselves behind a large counter in a typical government office, plastered with pamphlets on "how not to feed bears" as well as maps that showed the area from every point of view including 3-D, space shots, and the usual green topo views.

The woman on the other side of the counter looked up at us with a smile that gave away her true feelings about being up this early and having to talk to some pile-clad, bright-eyed winter-mongers. We were simply told that the skiing couldn't be better, but she wasn't really sure, having never been to the Bow Hut before and not being an off-trail hiker.

This whet our appetites even more for the snow and vast icefields. Once again we piled into the transport buggy and headed off up the Icefields Parkway to the Num-Ti-Jah entrance. Upon arriving, we noticed that the wind was strong and unrelenting off the lake. The drifts around the lake were large, but we were hungry for back-country powder.

It wasn't long before we had gathered our gear together, checked our avalanche transceivers, strapped on our shovels, axes and probe poles, and headed off down the Num-Ti-Jah Lodge road to the Bow Lake shoreline. The pace was moderate but smooth, with each of us trading off leads across the lake. A few times the blowing snow obscured the guy in front who was usually only five to ten meters ahead.

In no time we found ourselves at the entrance of a windswept crystal palace where the lake narrowed to a chasm that was unpassable along its base. We stopped here for a quick rest and discussed methods of surviving in an avalanche, and how to locate buried skiers. It seemed so routine; I had done it so many times, relating what my training and all my readings had taught me. We were all well prepared and practised. We would and could confront the growing blizzard ahead of us. We felt indestructible, invincible and stubborn. Our determination saw no bounds; our goals were our obsessions and nothing could stop us.

**"Suddenly I
was swept
down the
slope,
engulfed in
tons of snow."**

As we began to plod through knee-deep powder, our pace slowed to a crawl. We finally located the ancient packed trail which had two feet of fresh snow on top. It was like walking a frozen tight-rope; if you strayed off the trail, you found yourself wallowing in deep drifts.

As soon as we emerged from the trees, we found ourselves at the base of the first avalanche bowl. We crossed this slope one at a time until we fought our way out and on to the top of a knoll. There we had our first close-up view of the immense hanging Bow Glacier and Bow Falls. The sight in front of us was spectacular: a symphony of winter was before us. There were rolling moraine, hanging seracs, huge frozen waterfalls and a whirlwind of snow all around. We felt that we only had to enter this to be as one with it, and subsequently we were. In no time we had crossed the moraine and confronted the doorway of the gully that later would be one of the biggest nightmares of our lives. Unsuspecting, we headed into the mouth of the chasm and began our plod to its end.

Our cautions had increased and we were on the lookout for signs of danger. There had been no distant rumblings and no jumbles of snow that indicated previous avalanche activity. On route we exited once too early and regained the gully. Our guidebook was vague and brief. We finally found what appeared to be the exit and quickly entered onto a large avalanche slope that appeared

secure. The slope shone like the train of a wedding veil as it flows down the aisle. We could see our objective: ahead hung the huge drooping glacier that clung to the immense cliffs that surrounded the Bow Hut.

Rene was in front, about fifty metres ahead of Jon, who was about seventy metres ahead of me. Feeling the excitement of almost being there, I sped up. My stride quickened as I approached Jon. Suddenly I was swept down the slope, engulfed in tons of snow.

Over and over I turned; everything was so quick. Just as I started to slow down, I realised we all were caught. I was drifting slowly down the hill on my back, head downhill in the avalanche. Eventually I stopped. It began to compress around me like wet cement, forcing its way into every air pocket available. I managed to get one arm free and keep the snow off my face.

When it all stopped, I lay there for a few seconds to let the realisation sink in. I let out a yell and shot my arm up into the air. There was no answer. I yelled again and again, but no responses. Horror struck me; the other two must be completely buried—so fast—without warning. My only hope lay in my ability to free myself from this snowy grave. I worked feverishly, digging first my other arm out, then my torso. I realised that one of my skis was still attached and I would have to reach my binding to break free. This proved extremely frustrating, but I finally managed to open it with one of my poles that I was able to save.

Finally I was free. I heard a muffled cry to my right. As I approached, I noticed Jon in the same position as I had been in, but with both his arms pinned

behind him. I brushed snow off his face and looked at him. His eyes were wide, but he had a determination in him that showed through. When I was first approaching him, I managed to catch a glimpse of a ski and boot about fifty metres up the slope. I told Jon this and began his excavation immediately. I had him out in minutes.

Once free, I grabbed my shovel and ran up the slope over the rubble snow to where Rene must be. Jon was quickly behind me. We dug frantically and found his leg, torso, and shoulder, but couldn't find his head. I looked at Jon and said, "Be prepared." Then we found his face! It was as blue as ice—blue as death. I asked Jon to begin artificial respiration. Rene immediately began very shallow and raspy breathing. This put some hope into both of us. We quickly uncovered the rest of him and began to drag his body to a more secure location in the trees.

Rene later related that he could feel snow being pushed up his back, between his shirt and skin, and that he was frustrated because he didn't know how to stop it. The sensation, he explained, was terrifying, with no control of his own environment—like being paralysed.

We got Rene off the avalanche slope and into a treed area next to the slide path. We immediately fired up our stoves and proceeded to remove Rene's wet clothing and put him inside our sleeping bags. As Jon began to warm some hot chocolate, I began the process of warming Rene, who at this point was dropping quickly into lower levels of hypothermia. He had begun violent shivering and then stopped, which is actually a bad sign. I immediately crawled in next to him to reverse this process as quickly as possible. He was incoherent and mumbling to himself. Eventually he began to shiver again and regain some consciousness.

After approximately forty-five minutes of this slow recovery, he opened his eyes and wondered what had happened and if everybody was okay. I explained the situation to him and reassured him that we were all fine and would get out of this successfully. We began to feed him small sips of hot chocolate and keep him warm.

This freed one of us to search the slide for our equipment while the other observed Rene. Jon went to dig first and discovered two of the packs and two skis. After approximately half an hour, I traded with Jon and found the other pack and three more skis and three poles, but nothing else. Jon went back and checked again through the snow, but was unable to locate anything more. Every time we

went back onto the slope it felt as though we were walking around inside the gaping mouth of a large wintry beast that could snap its jaws closed at any moment. Even though we knew that the slope was probably safer than it had been before the slide, we couldn't help but keep one eye on the slope above us at all times.

Three hours after the avalanche had swept us down, we were back on our feet again ready to fight our way home. Rene seemed fine now. He put on some dry

clothes and became a participating member of our team once again. After some debate with little argument, we decided to retrace our steps back to a heavily wooded area that we had passed through earlier and attempt to build a shelter there and bed down for the night.

Once again we had to cross this slope with our heads cocked to one

side. We finally reached the other side after what seemed like an eternity. The going was rather easy considering we had only four skis and three poles between us. As soon as we entered the trees, Jon and I found ourselves waist-deep in bottomless snow that had grown quite heavy from the warmer temperatures normally prevalent at that time of the day.

Rene broke trail ahead of us on two skis, while Jon and I attempted to walk on his tracks with one foot and ski with the other. We traveled far enough so that we were well out of danger's way. We looked for a deep tree-moat and used this as a base for our shelter. Because of the fast approaching nightfall and Rene's condition, which mostly consisted of a bad headache, we chose not to build a quinzee shelter. The tree-moat would allow us to build something rather quickly and get out of the blizzard which was still increasing in intensity. We were very concentrated on the task at hand and had very little time to reflect on the events that had just unfolded. We dug an emergency tarp out of one of the packs to use as a roof and widened the base of the moat for three people.

We tied the tarp to the tree and spread it like a circus tent. We built some walls of snow and draped the edge of the tarp over the walls, then filled in the holes with snow and conifer branches from the surrounding trees. Eventually we had an effective shelter to protect us through the night and give us a sense of security.

We now had time to think about our ordeal. But the only conversation that we could muster consisted of statements like "We were lucky" and "It's not over yet." That was the truth; it was not over! We had a long way to go and needed all the resources we could muster. We had a quick dinner as things began to get dark

"Horror struck me; the other two must be completely buried—so fast—without warning. My only hope lay in my ability to free myself from this snowy grave."

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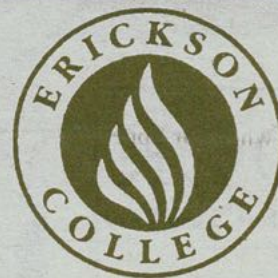
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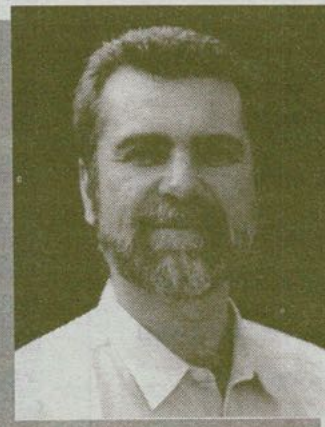
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and then arranged ourselves within the shelter like sardines, lying on our sides. At least it was warm in there—maybe too warm. We had to make the opening wider to let some of the warmth out.

We lay there for hours without talking, without sleeping, just reflecting. The more we reflected, the more we realised how precious life really is. The emotions overtook us all in their own way, but nothing was held back, and that was good. It meant that we would probably be able to come to terms with what had happened and deal with it in our own way. Some sleep eventually came, but it was intermittent and interspersed with muffled cries of alarm as we each re-experienced the previous day's events.

Finally there was light, but it was subdued, as it was still snowing heavily and looked as though it was not going to let up. We arose from our berth and began to ready ourselves for the excursion

back to the car, which seemed a long way off—a very long way off. We discussed whether we should attempt to extricate ourselves from this predicament or wait until we were overdue and be rescued by a chopper. We decided that a helicopter would not be able to fly in this weather and that it would mean spending another night out in this blizzard. We chose to leave.

The next decision was the route. Should we follow the summer trail along the top of the gully or risk traveling through the base again? After attempting the summer route for half an hour and sinking up to our chests in bottomless snow, we opted for the harder pack of the gully bottom.

We found an exit that dropped down into the usual winter route. The going wasn't much better. Rene would go on ahead and break trail while Jon and I would attempt to follow in his tracks,

moving one ski ahead and then shifting all the weight to this one ski which would promptly sink to knee level, then throwing the foot forward with no ski on it and shifting the weight to that foot which would end up sinking to hip level, and then repeating this all over again. It was certainly one of the most exhausting things I have ever had to attempt over a long period of time.

This also created the problem that we were constantly breaking the tension in the slab. To reduce the risk, we crossed each open slope into the gully, one at a time. Rene would cross the gully first and then stop and watch while either Jon or I crossed next. On one of the particularly large gullies, Jon was crossing last. In the middle of the slope the whole thing fractured, but did not release. If it had released, Jon would have definitely been buried. This kept us on edge constantly. We did not look forward to our turn to cross the gully. It was like walking the gauntlet.

After a couple of hours of this, we had one more sensitive part to cross. Rene crossed first and waited, then I crossed and waited, and then Jon crossed and once again, half way across the slope it fractured, but this time it released. I yelled "AVALANCHE!", and Jon somehow managed to almost run across the surface of the snow. The edge of the slab crossed the back of Jon's one ski, but failed to grab him. The snow piled up so high above our tracks that we estimated it to be at least two metres above the surface of the snow. Anyone caught in it would have been buried a long way under.

That was it: the worst danger seemed over. We could see the mouth of the canyon that opened up to the windswept moraine that had so awed us the day before. Now it was like paradise; it was one of the most beautiful places I had ever seen. Although the danger was mostly behind us, we still had a long way to go. We removed the skis we had on and walked across the moraine to the knoll we had stood on the previous day. Instead of traversing one more avalanche slope we took a route straight over the top of the wooded hill between the avalanche slope and the unpassable chasm.

This turned out to be the worst snow slogging we had experienced yet. Because we were now walking, we were in snow that reached our stomachs which eventually led to us crawling on our hands and knees until we could slide down the other side of the hill to the start of the outwash plain before Bow Lake. We now realised that we would probably all make it out alive. We dropped our packs and gear and began hugging each other and shaking hands and saying thanks. Nothing else mattered then but being alive.

We walked to the shore of the lake and began our journey across to the other side

which we couldn't see because of the high winds and the blowing snow. In fact, when we were in the middle of the lake, we had to support each other from being blown down by the wind which seemed to be gusting at one hundred and fifty kilometres an hour. The snow was like needles and the wind was like thunder in our ears.

It seemed as though this place was not ready to let us go just yet. It still had its icy fingers hanging onto our bodies, but we were strong. Our determination to get home was stronger than nature's strongest fury. We climbed a huge snow drift near the lodge and slid down the other side to asphalt. On one side of the parking lot was an older fellow in a large snowplow, clearing the parking lot. He looked at us for a second with inquiring eyes and then went back to his work. We didn't want to stop to tell him what had happened; we just wanted to get away from there as fast as possible.

Rene's car now resembled a limousine instead of the compact foreign car that it was. After we packed our gear and piled it and ourselves in, we started on down the highway to Lake Louise. Everything looked new and full of life. The sun came out and illuminated the peaks all around. It was a welcoming reward for surviving. Eventually we arrived back at the warden's office and went up stairs to sign in. The same woman was there and began to go through the routine of signing us back in, but looked at us inquiringly when we all just sat there grinning. Finally we began to tell her what happened. She interrupted us to get some wardens to listen. After telling the story and answering all their questions, one of the wardens said, "You have had a terrible experience, but don't let it prevent you from going out there again. There is a lot to discover and a lot the mountains can offer you if you let them."

After all of the formalities we were on our way again back to Calgary, talking, laughing, reflecting. Near Calgary, Rene was pulled over for speeding. The police officer gave us all a strange look when we smilingly thanked him for the ticket.

In June I went back up to the spot myself. Almost all of the snow was gone and the day was sunny and hot. I walked into the location in about one and a half hours, and was stunned. It really was a beautiful spot. The river was cascading in the chasm below; the birds were singing; the sun was warm. It wasn't the way I remembered it. The first thing that caught my eye was a ski sticking up in the snow beside the trail and a broken pole.

Someone had spotted it and put it there. But there was no sign of the rest of the equipment which still lay buried underneath the remaining snow. I constructed a weatherproof sign explaining what had happened and that there was still some equipment under the snow.

Avalanche: See page 41

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Menopausal Relief

Women should consider natural plant estrogens as an alternative hormonal therapy.

By David Steinman

Menopause is a difficult time for some women. They must deal with the physical symptoms such as dizziness, headache, difficulty breathing, heart palpitations and depression that accompany this time of life. Furthermore, women who complain of these symptoms to their physicians are most often put on synthetic hormones. Usually they are offered no choice of treatment, although they should be.

"The choice simply isn't fair. A woman with menopausal symptoms sees her doctor and he gives her a choice between symptom relief or breast cancer," says John McDougall M.D., author, radio, talk show host, and vegetarian advocate.

McDougall is referring to the most commonly prescribed treatment for relief of menopausal symptoms—synthetic hormones such as estrogen and progesterone—which many women today find unsatisfactory, both because of serious side effects, and because they simply don't want to take synthetic drugs the rest of their lives. Women with a history of breast cancer simply cannot afford the risk of estrogen therapy.

One of the most frequently prescribed estrogen replacement drugs for menopausal women is Premarin. On the label for Premarin, its manufacturer, Wyeth-Ayerst Laboratories, warns:

"The risk of cancer of the uterus increases the longer estrogens are used . . . the persistence of risk was demonstrated for 10 years after stopping estrogen treatment . . . Some studies have suggested a possible increased incidence of breast cancer in those woman taking estrogens for prolonged periods of time and especially if higher doses are used."

The label further warns that side effects include nausea, vomiting, pain, cramps, swelling, abdominal tenderness, yellowing of the skin and/or whites of the eyes, breast tenderness, enlargement of benign tumors of the uterus, bleeding or spotting, vaginal yeast infections, headaches, migraines, dizziness, faintness, mental depression, involuntary muscle spasms, hair loss, changes in sex drive and worsening of pre-existing conditions of heart disease.

With a list of side effects like that, it is understandable that women are concerned when physicians suggest the use of synthetic hormones. In exchange for temporarily halting bone loss or relieving hot flashes, women are incurring an increased risk for breast and endometrial cancer, blood clotting, and other serious side effects.

"The problem is that many doctors do not know what alternatives are available,"

notes physician Murray Susser. "They don't know how to balance women's hormones; furthermore, all too many physicians prescribe estrogens and progesterone with little sensitivity to women's cycles or their acute side effects and chronic health risks."

To be sure, neither McDougall nor Susser tells patients that they should absolutely never use hormone replacement therapy (HRT) with synthetic

estrogen and progesterone; after all, HRT does confer benefits to women, including temporarily halting bone loss, and possible protection against both heart disease and Alzheimer's, and many women like being on HRT. But physicians like McDougall and Susser believe in medical choice, and both say that women should at least consider the use of an alternative hormonal therapy based on phytoestrogens, literally meaning plant estrogens.

These herially derived estrogens are not as powerful as those derived from animals and used in pharmaceutical products like Premarin (derived from pregnant mare's urine, hence the name). But that is precisely their advantage: not only are they are powerful enough to exert a hormonal influence on women and help relieve menopausal symptoms, but they also appear to have protective benefits, especially against breast cancer.

In essence, phytoestrogens have both estrogenic and anti-estrogenic activity in the human body. Such substances are known as adaptogens, meaning they adapt themselves to the individual.

Several kinds of estrogen are produced in the human body. These bind to areas on estrogen-sensitive cells, such as those of the breast and uterus, called estrogen receptors. If the body is producing too

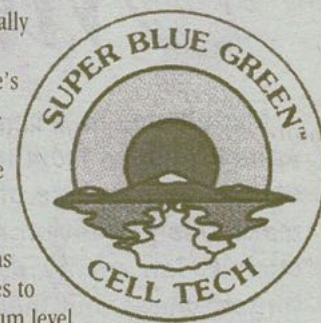
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Menopause

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much estrogen or highly toxic forms of the hormone, a diet rich in phytoestrogens is thought to literally overwhelm these more toxic forms with weaker phytoestrogens displacing them on estrogen receptors. If the body isn't producing as much estrogen as needed—as in the case of women during and following menopause—phytoestrogens still have enough power to exert subtle, yet powerful, biological effects.

There is evidence that a diet rich in plant estrogens has the power to relieve menopausal symptoms. Researchers reported in a 1992 issue of the British medical journal *Lancet* that women living in a small Japanese village and consuming the traditional low-fat Japanese diet were found to have levels of phytoestrogens up to 107 times higher than those found in American and Finnish women. High intake of foods rich in phytoestrogens may partly explain why hot flashes and other menopausal symptoms are so infrequent in Japanese women, noted the researchers.

Additionally, their phytoestrogen-rich diet may also explain in part why the risk of breast cancer is lower in Japanese women than in American women. Examples of foods rich in plant estrogens include soy products such as tofu, miso, aburage, atunage, koridofu, soybeans, and other beans, all of which have been shown to confer substantial protection against breast cancer.

Although these are not traditional American foods, women who are experiencing the cessation of their menses or who are menopausal may well find their symptoms greatly relieved by the inclusion of these foods in their diet. In fact, these findings have been further confirmed by Los Angeles nutritional expert Melvyn Werbach M.D., of the University of California at Los Angeles, who reports that some botanical extracts have been shown to exert estrogenic influences that are much more effective than synthetic estrogen for the control of hot flashes.

Quite apart from the inclusion of more soy foods in their diet, women can also use preparations of herbal extracts, available in most health food stores, that contain a wide range of phytoestrogens and other herbs that have been shown to help relieve menopausal symptoms. They can be purchased in pill form or as teas.

The following plants are among the most well documented to help women through the menopause both through their hormonal and other properties:

The estrogenic activity of licorice root (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*) is well documented. In fact, Japanese researchers report that licorice root has helped induce ovulation

in women who could otherwise not ovulate—strong evidence of its estrogenic powers.

Soy extracts are also included in many women's formulas. Soy contains an array of highly active and protective phytoestrogens. Several other estrogenic-active botanicals included in formulas are true unicorn root (*Aletris farinosa*), angelica (*Angelica sinensis*), and fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*).

Since these herbs are estrogenic, women often require a balancing blend of herbs to stimulate the body's production of progesterone. The most well known

and well documented supplier of the raw materials of progesterone is wild yam root (*Dioscorea villosa*) which was, in fact, the first major source of the raw materials for pharmaceutical progesterone back in the 1930s. Do not confuse this wild yam with those found in supermarkets; they belong to completely different plant families.

Another source for progesterone's raw building materials is fenugreek seed (*Trigonella foenum-graecum*). The berries of the chaste tree (*Vitex agnus-castus*) also contain essential oils and flavonoids that help increase the body's natural production of progesterone.

In addition to herbs that provide hormonal balance, additional ones can be used by women to provide a relaxed state of health to the uterine muscle and the body in general.

Black cohosh root (*Cimicifuga racemosa*) was introduced to American medicine by native Americans who called it squaw root with reference to one of its common uses in treating uterine disorders. "Among clinical findings, it promotes and restores healthy menstrual activity; it soothes irritation and congestion of the uterus, cervix and vagina," notes Daniel Mowrey, Ph.D., director of the Mountainwest Institute of Herbal Science.

Passion flower (*Passiflora incarnata*) is used primarily as a sedative and is especially helpful as women go through hormonal adjustments. Black haw bark (*Viburnum prunifolium*), chamomile (*Matricaria chamomilla*) and raspberry leaf (*Rubus idaeus*) have each been shown to provide significant relief to the uterus. Saw palmetto berry (*Serenoa repens*) can decrease ovarian and uterine irritability and is used to treat a wide range of diseases of the reproductive system.

It is important that these herbs always be purchased in extract form when taken as pills, and women who are presently using synthetic hormones should not begin their use without first notifying their doctor. Some women have found that the use of a natural herbal tonic utilizing many of the herbs described

Menopause: See page 38

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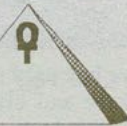
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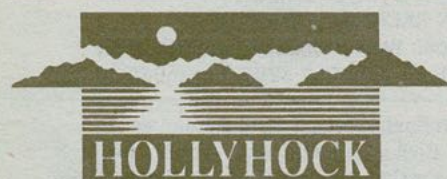
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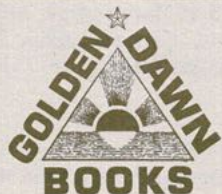
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INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE OF TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE

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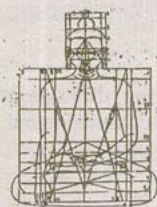
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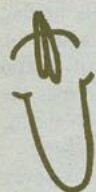
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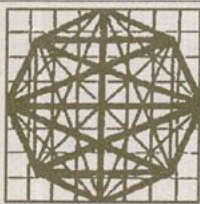
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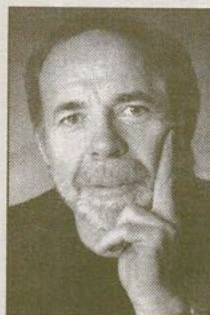
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—John Dryden

Learning to Love Myself

One woman's journey from eating disorders to self-acceptance.

By Delaine Moore

I didn't actually become bulimic until I was 20 years old; only then did I successfully make myself throw up. But my battle with food and my weight began much earlier, when I hit puberty. I wanted so much to be slim and beautiful—and what God gave me just wasn't good enough. So I starved my body, polluted it, exercised it fanatically, deprived it, hated it.

My bulimia was at its worst when I was traveling around Australia at the age of twenty-three. For one year, I binged and purged my way from one side of the continent, through the Outback, to the other side of the country. My eating disorder was out of control and I was very unhappy—even suicidal. My mind was full of self-deprecating thoughts, constantly criticizing me for the things I said, the things I did, the way I looked, and my inability to lose weight. I felt overwhelmed and very alone; it was

my 'best kept secret.'

Today, at the age of 26, I am no longer bulimic. And I am glad, even grateful that I suffered from an eating disorder. Because in hitting rock-bottom, I began a spiritual journey that has transformed my life.

My weight wasn't the real issue of my eating disorder; self esteem was. I didn't really want to wear a size five and look like Cindy Crawford. I just wanted to be loved and accepted by other people. I wanted to feel worthy and validated.

Ultimately, feelings of love and worthiness are what we all want and search for in life. They are the common needs of our spirits or 'inner selves.' But, as my eating disorder showed me, we can't look outside ourselves to other people to fulfill these needs. We must look within us, and *love ourselves*.

Self-love does not imply vanity or conceit; it isn't pretentious or superficial in any way. Self-love doesn't judge or

criticize. It doesn't blame, and it isn't hurtful.

Loving ourselves is about self-responsibility: acknowledging that we can only ever know and answer to ourselves. It's about validating and exploring our emotions, instead of denying and suppressing them. It involves expressing our true selves with an open heart, instead of being how others want us to be. It's about knowing and following our own truth, and finding joy and peace in our individual uniqueness.

When I was a child, I had no problem expressing my feelings: if I was upset, I wailed, if I was mad, I screamed, if I was happy, I'd giggle and jump up and down.

But then I grew up. And somewhere along the way I learned to shove my emotions down inside me. Apparently, I was supposed to act like a mature, intelligent, polite young woman at all times—this is what my family wanted,

this is what society wanted. I was also supposed to be ambitious, get a good-paying job, and try to achieve the token female body. I just wanted everyone's approval, so I unconsciously strove to be what they wanted.

Consequently, I didn't really know who I was. My identity was largely defined by what I did or accomplished, and how my body looked. To overcome my eating disorder, I had to look deep inside myself and find the real Delaine Moore. I had to embrace this beautiful and sensitive spirit within me and know her, understand her, love her, heal her. I had to listen to her cries of pain, her hopes, her dreams, her passions. And I had to express her truth to the world—let her voice be heard.

I believe that in our society, many people are suffering as I did. They may not have an eating disorder, but they still lack feelings of self-love and worth; they

lack a strong sense of who they are.

Our society has taught us to be human 'doers,' instead of human 'beings.' We learn to achieve, compete, get ahead, make money. Many of us largely define who we are by what we do or have accomplished. We compare our lives to those of others to measure our own value. We rank ourselves in virtually all aspects of our lives: friendships, family, jobs, our bodies, our personalities. We're quick to label ourselves as Good or Bad, a Success or a Failure.

This way of thinking is very stressful and harmful to us. It discounts the value and beauty of our inner selves. No points are allocated for trying, for being and doing the best we can in any given situation. Comparing ourselves to others and labeling ourselves, we unjustly deny and crush our spirits. We ignore the fact that every experience enables us to grow—and in growth, we are always a success.

I also believe that many people are afraid to express who they really are. They fear that if they do, perhaps no one will like them, and that would really hurt.

But the fact is, we have no control over what other people think or do, and they *will* hurt us, intentionally, or not. If we look only to them for feelings of approval and love, we give away our own power and place our hearts at their mercy. But if we love ourselves, we feel worthy, regardless of what others think. We can only ever be responsible to, and for, ourselves.

Recently, a friend of mine, whom I'll call Matt, expressed his feelings of loneliness and unhappiness at not having a girlfriend. Above all, Matt wants to feel loved, and like many people, he believes the only way he'll find it is through a relationship. So he tries to convey himself to women as someone he thinks is worth loving. He talks about his job, how much money he makes, he dresses smart, he's charming and tells funny jokes.

But Matt isn't *being* himself; he's trying to *prove* himself. His self-worth is wrapped up in what others think of him, so he tries to be the most intelligent, funniest, richest, most physically attractive man in the room. If some other man comes along who is 'better' than he is, or if a woman rejects him, he feels deflated and worthless. Underneath the charade, Matt is so out of touch with who he is, and full of insecurities. Yet at the same time, beneath that mask lies a beautiful, unique, and generous spirit. He just doesn't know or love it.

I believe that many men and women largely determine their self-worth by the way they look. I know, through my own experience and through conversations with girlfriends, how prevalent and serious it is amongst women. It's like we've been trained to compete with each other for attention for men, and our bodies are our number one weapon. So if another woman walks in the room who is prettier, thinner, or has bigger breasts, we feel

insecure; we feel threatened. As a result, some of us may become jealous and 'catty,' while others may become depressed and withdrawn.

I can't even begin to count the number of times I've said to women, "No, you don't look fat," as they critically examined every inch of their bodies in the mirror. Nor can I count the number of times women have shed tears on my shoulder, or their faces have fallen, because of feelings of fatness or ugliness. This madness has to end. Too many wonderful people are beating themselves up over their appearance, when all they really want is love. They must be taught to love themselves, for this will give them sustained feelings of worthiness and self-acceptance.

Another important aspect of self-love is self-forgiveness. I know first hand how difficult this is to do; when I had my eating disorder, I was always criticizing myself for my mistakes and weakness. It's awfully hard to forgive ourselves when we're more than aware of our flaws and shameful things we've done in the past.

But chastising and torturing ourselves over our shortcomings and mistakes won't do us any good; that will only harbor more negativity towards ourselves. What we have to do is *love them away*.

We all have strengths, we all have weaknesses. This is part of being human, plain and simple. So we have to cut ourselves some slack; we must realize that life is a learning process, and every experience helps us grow, including the times we hurt ourselves and other people. My bulimia proved to me that negative experiences can be followed by periods of accelerated growth; they're a wake-up call to making more positive and loving choices in our lives.

We must be gentle and compassionate with ourselves in our learning. We must examine why we felt and acted out of feelings like anger, jealousy, or malice. What needs were we trying to fulfill within ourselves? What did we learn from these feelings and situations?

Underneath the hurtful actions and feelings, we won't find an "evil monster"; instead, we'll see a being who lashed out the best way it could to feel empowered and validated. Careful introspection allows us to know and understand our strengths and weaknesses. Only then can we ever hope to control our weaknesses, instead of letting them control us. Forgiveness is only possible when we can accept them, and love them.

Our society doesn't teach us how to *truly* love ourselves—unconditionally, compassionately, joyfully. The words 'spirit' or 'inner selves' are seldom mentioned, as if they implied religious zealotry, hocus pocus, or psychiatric analysis.

I believe it's time we get rid of the stereotypes and ignorance, and start talking about them. It's time we explore

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our spiritual needs. These days, so many of us are angry, depressed, stressed out, in a bad mood—sometimes all in one day. Why is it so difficult for us to find sustained feelings of love, happiness and peace of mind? Perhaps it's because we falsely believe that love is something we must struggle to find 'out there' in life's chaos, when in truth, it's something we must find and nurture within us.

The mind, body and spirit are all connected; all are interrelated. Because we have neglected the spiritual component of this triangle, our minds and bodies are suffering, too.

We're taught that our rational minds are supreme; we've always got to feed them more information, learn more, think more. Consequently, many of us virtually live in our heads, passing our days in a zombie-like state, thinking, worrying, planning, analyzing. Our minds constantly scream at us for what we don't have, things still to do, problems left unsolved. They're so overloaded with problems and worries that the world around us seems tumultuous and negative.

Our bodies respond to all this mental stress and are often tense, run-down, or sick. And when they aren't sick, we're often putting them on diets or criticizing them in some way. In my case, I took it to the extreme: I treated my body like a machine, relentlessly torturing it and ignoring all its needs.

If we acknowledge and address our spiritual needs, our perceptions of ourselves and the world would change. We, in our totality, would experience a

happier more loving way of living. Self-love is the thread that would weave our wholeness—our minds, bodies, and spirits—together.

As I learned to love my inner-self, my body image began to change. I developed an adoration, almost a fascination with my body. These legs, cellulite and all, allowed me to walk and dance and climb mountains. This stomach, though a bit flabby, would someday protect a growing fetus. These breasts, always considered several cup-sizes too big, were soft and womanly. My "trouble spots" no longer disgusted me. I realized that my entire body is uniquely put together, that it is a beautiful part of me!

Mentally, I am stronger and clearer. I am much more at peace with myself. No longer is my head full of negative, self-deprecating thoughts. I don't feel pressured to compete with others or to try to be like others; because I am unique and special, and just as worthy as anyone else, just the way I am.

I believe that love truly is supreme, that it does conquer all. It's the common need of humanity; it's the reason we all want to live.

Let's open up our hearts and let its light roam freely through our spirits. Let's finally give ourselves permission to bask in all that grows in its light: beauty, sweetness, joy, tenderness, peace...and freedom to be who we really are.

Delaine Moore does individual and group counseling on body image, self-esteem and eating disorders in Victoria and can be reached at (250) 383-3436.

Hannibal Lokumbe's Inspiration

Hannibal Lokumbe is a man who found what he loved to do—compose music and play his trumpet and drums. His desire is to bring diverse people together for a positive experience. While in Chicago recently, Lokumbe played his music in a housing project as well as the symphony hall. At the housing project he talked to the children about African history. His goal is to encourage African-American children, often considered problematic, to discover the beauty of God in themselves.

At Chicago Symphony Hall, Lokumbe's composition, "African Portraits" was premiered. As I listened I was moved in my soul by what he wrought with a 250-voice African-American choir, full world-class orchestra, jazz quartet, native African instruments, and solo singers. Gospel, blues, opera, and native rhythms were blended together for an hour of musical story-telling.

In the work, Lokumbe (who said that he thanks the Spirits that gave him each note and word), describes the life of a Mandingo village in West Africa before the encroachment of Europeans. He then traces the effect of slavery upon the world and details

some of the horrors as well as some of the brilliant musical forms created by those condemned to slavery—namely, spirituals, blues, and jazz. Lokumbe said:

"African Portraits" is my piece of wood to be placed into the fire of human reason and light. I want to keep this ancient and healing fire burning bright enough to cast its flames into the dark hidden crevices where man's fear and hatred live. I want to fuel it enough so that its heat will warm the dreams of those who wrestle in agony with their existence, a fire for all who treasure the light of God"

Here is a man who has found his purpose and out of that evolved his way to love and contribute to the world. What happened to those of us who packed the concert hall for three nights? We were touched, moved to tears, thrilled into joy, and heartened in our souls. Beyond a moving evening was a message of great love and redemption, a message of how human error was transformed into a taste of heaven.

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The Ultimate Relationship

It is with ourselves, first, that we must learn to live happily ever after.

As an evolving species, it is only natural that our relationships will also evolve. Love is a manifestation of Life Force. We seek love, for it is basic to our survival. As plants turn towards the sun, so we look for the warmth of loving connections. Each of us has emerged from a sea of loving consciousness, the oneness from which each soul differentiates itself for the three dimensional experience. Deep within our awareness is the memory of the eternal, constant love in which our essence was bathed. The Soul, while merged into that oneness, experienced a profound, harmonious completion. Throughout our lifetime experience, it is this completion that we are continually seeking.

The powerful maternal connection is designed to ease the transition of the Soul into physical form. The child cries, because discomfort is a new and foreign experience. When an infant, only days or weeks old, giggles while sleeping, it is because he or she is remembering, or perhaps re-experiencing, the joyful energies felt by spirit prior to taking up residence in this tiny body.

The Soul is Love. The Essence of our being is Love. Somehow in the confusion of moving between dimensions, an error in consciousness occurs. If not corrected, a lifetime of pain and struggle ensue. *The error is in striving to be loved, rather than to BE LOVE.*

From early on we look to others to love us, to try to recreate that memory of harmonious completion. We associate this with the unconditional love of the Mother, rather than with our own Soul, because that is our *earliest conscious memory* of love. But the Mother cannot always be with us, and so we experience the pain of separation and loss. We think we are out of love. This is like having millions in the bank, but not knowing it, and living life as a pauper, begging in order to meet our most basic needs. Oblivious to our own inner resources, it is easy to become dependent on others.

After the powerful experience of the Mother's love for her newborn, the next big external rush comes with romantic love. Realizing that the Mother's (or parent's) love is not the eternal, constant force that is vaguely recalled in the depths of consciousness, hope is revived in the form of the Lover. Ah, that we could be swept off our feet and carried to that blissful place of eternal joy. And in some

senses we are. Not because we are loved, but because we open our hearts, and allow the loving energy of the Universe to come flowing through. We touch on that place of being love.

Unfortunately, we err again, attributing that feeling to an external source, the lover. When things don't work out, or love is withdrawn, we assume that something is wrong with one of us. Either I am not lovable, or the other is not capable of love. We move into a place of judgment, either of self or other. Judgment and love are mutually exclusive. We cannot do both at the same time.

If we are on a path of growth, gradually we awaken to the truth that no one can give what we are seeking. Not our parents, not our children, not our friends or our lovers. We are here to learn to give it to ourselves.

The divine, constant and eternal love that we seek exists within us already. It is inherent in our Souls. We have taken on physical form so that we can experience that Universal Oneness in this dimension. Yet it seems so difficult to give ourselves the unconditional loving and acceptance that we would give readily to our children, our friends, and our partners. It is with ourselves, first, that we must learn to live happily ever after. The blossoming of a new love is a mirror for the joy that we could experience if we loved ourselves fully. We have paid lip service to this concept for a long time, but relationship struggles are the wake up calls that remind us that we are looking in the wrong place for fulfillment.

Is this to suggest that we can live without loving relationships? Not exactly. We will not live well without a loving relationship with ourselves. And when we have this, we no longer need the love of others.

Once we have truly learned to love and honor ourselves, there is no longer duality within us, and we become living expressions of love. We are Love. If two such beings come together, then there is a beautiful celebration of Souls. If we all do it, then we transcend all duality, and create Heaven on Earth. If you go deep into the recesses of your consciousness, you may find a vague recollection that this was the plan.

Gwen Randall-Young is a psychotherapist and author of *Dancing Soul: The Voice of Spirit Evolving*, and *Echoes Through Time: A Message of Healing for Men*.



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Love Heals

Terrorism vs. Love

After the bombings in Oklahoma, Saudi Arabia, the possible bombing of TWA flight 800, and the information I heard that three buildings in Phoenix were supposed to be bombed recently by fanatics, I can't help but be enraged by what I hear on the news. It scares me that people in our world can be so violent and malicious.

What do you think is going to happen if this trend continues? Are you fearful for our country? I've never read your opinions on this subject, and I'm interested in what you have to say.

R.L., Kingman, AZ

Dear R.L.,

When people are raised in hatred, then terrorism seems natural to them. It is the ultimate act of blame. Blame is always a powerless act. It comes from believing that you have no control or responsibility over your circumstances.

Those of us on the so-called path of enlightenment know that we are co-creators of our circumstances. Therefore, on some level, what is out there is a reflection of what we have within us. In order to heal the world, we need to heal the hatred in our own hearts. The best thing we can do is to work diligently to spread and share *love* throughout the world. As we do this, we must realize that all that is *unloving* will come to the surface to be healed. We must look at and see the fear, hatred, racism, abuse, terrorism, and so on, in order to bring a new awareness to it. We cannot heal what we cannot or will not see.

We can see this as a frightening time, a time to let our own anger and rage emerge, or we can see these problems as opportunities to create healing. How you choose to use your mind is up to you. You can add to the problem or you can help heal it.

When I hear of terrorist attacks or any crises in the world, I immediately surround the whole situation with white light. I send love and healing energy to everyone connected with it, including whomever may have done the damage. Rage and fear do not heal anything. Hatred begets hatred. An eye-for-an-eye philosophy makes everyone blind.

Let us all know and affirm: *Things aren't getting worse; they are getting healed!*

Accept others as they are

My husband and I are in our mid-20s and have a pretty good marriage, but it's funny—it seems that the very quality

that I admire about him is what drives me crazy. You see, he is quiet and reserved, which I like overall because I tend to be the opposite, but he is also usually anti-social in groups, barely responding to questions by others or making conversation. Also, he is completely resistant to attending any type of social engagement with me. For example, I can't

get him to go to company parties, even when I express to him that I would like his support, and that it would be a respectful and loving thing to do.

Should I just grit my teeth and deal with this part of his personality for the rest of my life, or can you think of some way in which I could gently prod him out of his shell?

T.F., Oceanside, CA

Dear T.F.,

Let's see your husband as perfect, whole and complete as he is. You are also perfect, whole and complete as you are. You both have a few different likes and dislikes. We create problems when we try to change the other person. The only person we can ever change is ourselves. So, instead of suffering and gritting your teeth, you could make peace with yourself, even if your husband does not care for social affairs. Most spouses hate company parties. If you enjoy being a social butterfly than you go. You can tell him all about it when you come home.

When your husband understands that you do not judge him, then he will relax. Let there be no threat to your marriage over these differences. In time he may change and enjoy social encounters more, or you may change and enjoy being quiet more.

Affirm: *I have a loving, harmonious relationship with my husband. All is well.*

Fear of abandonment

I am a man in my 50s who has been in an on-again, off-again relationship with the same woman for 12 years. I really want to love her and be with her, but it seems that as soon as I get very close (or she does), I back away and cause some problem that creates a rift in our relationship.

Mayor: From page 35

before daybreak, one of us witnessed a horrifying close call on 41st. As my husband was waiting for a schoolboy to cross the intersection, a fast-approaching, lone vehicle, coming from the opposite direction, did not see the boy and made no attempt to slow down. Luckily, in this case, after my husband sounded his horn and gestured, the boy saw the oncoming car at the last split second and managed to jump backwards out of the way. Obviously, waving a reflective flag in this case would have prevented the near-tragedy.

The police tell us that the only safe way is for pedestrians to cross busy or fast or wide streets at a traffic light. But we feel it is the wrong priority to expect people to walk two to seven or more blocks alongside a loud, noxious-fume-filled, hazardous street, when they could safely cross and carry on along a more peaceful side street.

In conclusion, we would really like to see the Safety Flag Initiative implemented immediately. Apparently some counties in Washington State carry out this plan with great success already. The cost of such a procedure would be modest, indeed—especially when compared to the large sums of money routinely spent on making the city more convenient for the automobile! The flags could even be endorsed or sponsored by local businesses (I.C.B.C., B.C.A.A., etc.), making them a no-cost item.

When a pedestrian is hit by a car, there is untold cost in human suffering plus financial burden to society in terms of lost productivity, medical and emergency response costs, etc. etc.. In the case of June Black—her active service to man, beast and Mother Earth being cut short by ten or fifteen years—we all suffer a great loss and at great cost.

Being the person that she was, June would certainly want some good to come for others through this tragic mishap of hers.

Please let us know how we can help to bring these action plans into fruition, so that other families can be spared such unnecessary tragedies in our city in the future.

Respectfully yours,

Reimer and Christina Kroecker

To help sponsor this Initiative, contact the Mayor and Council, Vancouver City Hall, 453 West 12th Avenue, Vancouver B.C. V5Y 1V4.

Louise Hay: From page 33

She thinks that the problem stems from my childhood, but I don't know. My brother and I were put in an orphanage by our mother when I was 5, and I was there until I was 11, although my mother did take my brother out a few years after he was put in. My girlfriend thinks that I'm too frightened to get too close to her for fear that she will take her love away. I'm not sure if this is an ac-

curate assessment of the situation or not, but whatever the case, do you have any advice on how I can get over my tendency to always back away?

A.R., Toronto, ON

Dear A.R.,

All problems stem from childhood. Children who are sent to orphanages usually develop a lifelong fear of abandonment. It is very hard to release these deep-seated inner fears without going to therapy or doing some sort of deep inner work.

There is still a part of you that is terrified that if you love someone, you will be abandoned *once again*, and your inner child does not know how he could handle that.

If you feel that you cannot go to therapy, then I would suggest that you do a series of meditations for your inner child. Talk to your inner child, call him by name, hold him in your arms, tell him you will always love him and be there for him, and promise him that you will never abandon him. Ask him what he needs to be happy. You may need to have many of these conversations in meditation until your inner child feels safe and loved. It is also vital that you consciously forgive your mother, or you will never be free. When you have accomplished this, then you will be free to love. Also, be very clear that your very patient girlfriend is *not* your mother.

Affirm: *I heal the past, and I am free to love!*

Louise L. Hay is a metaphysical teacher and the bestselling author of 17 books, including You Can Heal Your Life. For a free catalogue of books, audios, videos and other products by Louise Hay and other Hay House authors, please call (800) 654-5126. If you would like Louise to answer your letter, address your letter to: Dear Louise Column, c/o Hay House, Inc., P.O. Box 5100, Carlsbad, CA 92018-5100.

The Extraordinary Power of LOVE

by Janet Hobbs

Once upon a time there was a monk who after many years, finally achieved self-realization and heard the call to write a book.

He had never forgotten that as a young monk, he had been confused and upset by ponderous and misguided religious writings. One day in his despair he vowed that when he truly understood LOVE he would write something true, something heartfelt and something that would actually assist people in their journey. For he felt that LOVE, although talked about, was greatly misunderstood. So he sat down to write his book.

He took out the first page and right in the middle, with perfect focus and concentration and a truly loving intent, he wrote the word LOVE.

Immediately, across the street, a woman put down the phone and comforted her crying child. Across town, a family picked up their new dog. Three thousand miles away, an unexpected wind arose and blew away the city smog.

With the same focus and concentration, with peace and sincere intent, the monk wrote LOVE in the middle of the second page.

Immediately, several blocks away, a child was conceived, and a woman who had been contemplating death decided instead to risk truly living. Many people in the city just felt happy for no apparent reason. In the capital, an attempt by the government to cover up a scandalous misuse of money was unsuccessful.

The monk pulled out a third page and in the middle wrote LOVE with the same feeling and intent as before. Not far away, a woman from a dysfunctional family suddenly, effortlessly, forgave her parents and in that moment ended the cycles of pain that had dogged her family for generations. In the city, a businessman asked a depressed colleague to lunch, and a mother bent down to give her tired child a piggyback. Across the world, a rich man gave a poor man one hundred dollars, a fortune in that country.

In the middle of the fourth page, the monk completed the writing of LOVE.

Nearby, a woman with small children chose to meditate for five minutes rather than let her irritation run things. A child in a coma from a car accident and not expected to live opened her eyes. A man and woman destined to become lovers met for the first time, and a wise and gentle healer felt a surge of LOVE flow through her hands.

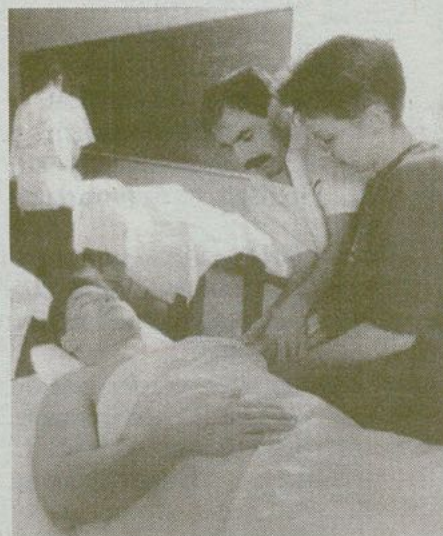
The monk did this 365 times, for each day of the year. He really wanted to remind people about LOVE since he'd found that LOVE was the true key to happiness and self-realization.

Several publishers returned his manuscript, but the monk felt it had already changed the world. Naturally, being a monk, he gave away copies or showed people how to write it themselves. The manuscript became so widespread and so well-known and had such an impact on people that it changed the world again.

The monk became even happier and more loving. Such is the power of LOVE.

Janet Hobbs is a Vancouver healer and writer whose book LOVE will be published this summer. She can be reached at 604-929-9223.

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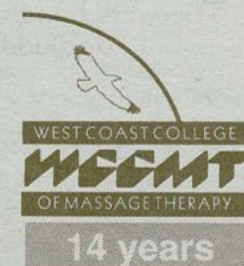


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The Holy Spirit is our harpist,
And all the strings
Which are touched in Love
Must sound.

-Mechtild of Magdeburg

Once the realization is accepted that even between the
closest human beings infinite distances continue to ex-
ist, a wonderful living side by side can grow up, if they
succeed in loving the distance between them which
makes it possible for each to see the other whole against
the sky.

-Rainer Maria Rilke

Because you're not what I would have you be
I blind myself to who, in truth, you are.
Seeking mirage where desert blooms, I mar
Your you. Aah, I would like to see
Past all delusion to reality:
Then would I see God's image in your face,
His hand in yours, and in your eyes his grace.
Because I'm not what I would have me be,
I idolize Two who are not any place,
Not you, not me, and so we never touch.
Reality would burn, I do not like it much.
And yet in you, in me, I find a trace
Of love which struggles to break through
The hidden lovely truth of me, of you.

To a Long Loved Love

-Madeleine L'Engle

Sing and dance together and be joyous,
but let each one of you be alone,
Even as the strings of a lute are alone
though they quiver with the same music.

-Kahlil Gibran

Today, like every other day, we woke up empty
and frightened. Don't open the door to the study
and begin reading. Take down the dulcimer.
Let the beauty of what we love be what we do.
There are hundreds of ways to kneel and kiss the ground.

-Jelaluddin Rumi

The time will come
when, with elation,
you will greet yourself arriving
at your own door, at your own mirror,
and each will smile at the other's welcome,

and say, sit here. Eat.
You will love again the stranger who was your self.
Give wine. Give bread. Give back your heart
to itself, to the stranger who has loved you

all your life, whom you ignored
for another, who knows you by heart.
Take down the love letters from the bookshelf,

the photographs, the desperate notes,
peel your own image from the mirror.
Sit. Feast on your life.

-Derek Walcott

To June With Love and Remembrance

A Tribute to Vancouver Activist June Black

By Nancy Knickerbocker

*I think that I shall never see
A car as lovely as a tree.*

*But trees are cut down every day
To give the cars more right-of-way...*

June Black, author of this satiric doggerel, often used humor in her crusade against the automobile and its pernicious impact on the planet. Yet her message was super-serious.

June and her husband, Jim, had only one child, Donald, who was killed at age seventeen by a drunk driver. Looking back over more than twenty years since his death, she said: "There were times when I didn't know if I would be able to live through it." A life-long activist, June directed her personal grief into political action, and her bouyant personality helped her carry on.

She became increasingly nervous behind the wheel, though, and terrified in traffic. Conscious of the environmental damage done by auto emissions, June and Jim sold their family car and committed themselves to riding the bus, despite the many inconveniences.

*So, while we stand and cool our feet,
We come to hate the car elite,*

*Resent the subsidies we pay
To help these killers on their way.*

On the afternoon of Saturday, January 4th, June went to a meeting of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, a pacifist group she had long supported, as did her mother before her. A friend who attended the same meeting later told me: "I thought how vibrant and well she looked that day. At seventy-five, she was still so active and strong."

Strong enough, certainly, to walk home to her apartment in Kerrisdale. She never made it, though. Crossing Granville Street at 47th, two cars stopped to let her pass, but the car in the curb lane struck her down. The only comfort to Jim and others who loved her is that she died instantly. White hair suddenly stained red, and then all was darkness.

The next day, reeling with the news, I called to offer condolences to Jim, and was overwhelmed to hear June's clear voice on the answering machine. Memories flooded back.

June strumming her ukelele and belting out anti-free-trade tunes. Her crisp letters to the Editor. June hauling another petition out of her purse, ready with the

facts about why we ought to care as passionately as she did about East Timor or nuclear warships in our harbor. Her lilting laugh, like wind chimes on a spring day. Her slender fingers folding newsprint, teaching me to make origami peace cranes.

A week after she died, more than one hundred and fifty people gathered at the Unitarian Church to celebrate her life and grieve her sudden, wrenching loss. "Greater than sorrow, greater than shock, is love," said Rev. Sydney Morris.

"Love conquers even this terrible time, and binds all hearts in courage to face the depths." She invited mourners to take the pulpit and share their thoughts.

Slowly, Jim came forward first. He looked devastated, yet so dignified. He spoke of June's generosity, kindness, sensitivity and loving nature. "June has been central to my life for more than fifty years. It's difficult to imagine how I'll be able to carry on without her," he said. "It does me good to see so many of her friends here today. I thank you for coming and sharing my great grief."

Then one by one, more than twenty people, young and old, paid her tribute. They recalled times together on the picket line and in protest marches, carrying placards and banners beautifully hand-painted by June.

One woman confessed that she was not ready to completely give up her car, but she vowed that at least once a week she would ride her bike or take the bus as a way of keeping June's memory alive.

Another friend read a letter she wrote to City Council, requesting that a sign be put up and some flowers planted to mark the spot where June died, and to raise awareness about the human costs of the car. Everyone lined up after the service to add their signatures to the petition.

Vancouver police said there is no evidence that high speed or alcohol played a role in June's death. However, charges will likely be laid under the Motor Vehicle Act against the driver. In 1995, cars killed fifteen pedestrians in Vancouver—a small fraction of the roughly five hundred people who die every year on B.C. roads.

June Black was Vancouver's first traffic fatality of 1997, but not the last. As she so prophetically wrote:

*Trees give shelter, life and breath
While cars bring smog and stress and death.*



The Car & The Tree

By June Black

I think that I shall never see
A car as lovely as a tree.

But trees are cut down every day
To give the cars more right-of-way.

Since autos multiply so fast,
I don't see how the trees can last.

Destroying trees that clean our air,
While cars pollute — that's just not fair,

Especially to those of us
Who wait on corners for the bus.

Cars idle there while lights are red,
Spew poisonous fumes, but nothing's said

About this stuff going in our noses
When we'd prefer to sniff the roses.

More deadly fumes then emanate
When green lights say, "accelerate."

Those in cars escape our plight,
With all their windows closed up tight.

We bussers have more tales of woe:
Gridlocking cars make buses slow.

So, while we stand and cool our feet,
We come to hate the car elite,

Resent the subsidies we pay
To help these killers on their way.

These millstones: put the lot to rest!
In better transit let's invest.

Reclaim the pavement; grow more trees;
Increase the oxygen we breathe;

Build more paths for skates and bikes;
Grow more food; take more hikes;

Walk car-less streets; hear far less noise;
Safer play for girls and boys.

No ads for cars are in the press;
Forests happy: logging less.

Car commercials off TV!
A miracle, don't you agree?

"A pipe dream!" comes the rash reply,
"Too many jobs on cars rely."

But, do these jobs provide a "living"
While life on Earth, they're quickly killing?

Trees give shelter, life and breath,
While cars bring smog and stress and death.

We're in a fix — Catch 22;
The challenge is: what shall we do?

In war there's no procrastination;
We simply mobilize the nation.

Instant jobs for everyone
Until the victory is won.

Let's do the same to fight pollution —
Put all to work to find solution.

Resources? Money? We have it all.
Let's start right now — no time to stall!

Cherish trees instead of cars;
Earth must not end up like Mars!

— December, 1995

A Letter to the City from June's Friends

*Let's Take Action Together
in June's Memory*

Dear Mayor and Council:

A tragic and fatal accident on the afternoon of January 4th, 1997 has prompted us to write this letter.

The life of a healthy, energetic, useful-to-society, spry, "young", peace/ecology activist, June Black, was snuffed out while she was crossing Granville Street at the corner of 47th Avenue.

We know that too many pedestrians are mowed down at intersections every year. The police and the media become desensitized and take a "pedestrian beware" attitude.

One of this outstanding citizen's missions was to make the city a more people-friendly, less car-crazed place. We would like to see her work carried on and see constructive and positive measures implemented to prevent similar tragic traffic fatalities in the future. We would like to see more concern for and encouragement of safe, efficient pedestrian travel, and less priority given to "King Car."

We therefore request that the City consider the following actions:

1. Adopt the custom of memorial markers to be conspicuously displayed on corners where pedestrian fatalities have taken place.

2. Paint lines across *all* intersections of busy six-lane roads like Granville Street, and have frequent signs to remind drivers to WATCH for pedestrians crossing (even if there are not many pedestrians in that area—all the more need to be cognizant).

3. The City make available for pedestrian use while crossing busy streets a quiver-like container of hand-held, bright, reflective flags on corners. The pedestrian would take one flag to wave or hold out in front of or above him or herself while crossing the street. Upon safe arrival on the other side of the street, the pedestrian would then deposit the flag in the dispenser on that side. He or she would thus be seen *before* emerging from any blind spots, such as lanes covered by stopped cars, etc. This would also prevent deaths occurring from crossing wide streets at night or in the dark early morning hours.

All too often we hear on the morning traffic reports: "...accident involving a pedestrian..." Usually the location is Granville, Oak, Knight or 41st. As a matter of fact, just yesterday morning, shortly

Mayor: See page 33

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order to experience it?

Book Reviews Books of Choice

Vancouver's best-loved bookstores pick their favourite books for your reading pleasure.

The Alternative Wedding Book Northstone Publishing

At once delightful and daunting, weddings offer mixed blessings. As the social celebration of a shared love, they



mark a key transition in our lives. But they also come with lots of social, cultural, and family pressure to make that special day absolutely perfect. And that can feel over-

whelming, not to mention costly.

Northstone Publishing's *The Alternative Wedding Book* lives up to its subtitle: Create a beautiful wedding that reflects your values and doesn't cost the earth. Published in 1995, the book was originally developed by the Alternatives Collective. Started in 1973, this Collective protested the commercialization of Christmas. Its members have now produced many resources for people interested in responsible living and celebrating.

The Alternative Wedding Book is one of the best examples of Alternatives' emphasis on voluntary simplicity. Readers planning a first-time wedding, second marriage, renewal of vows, or a very special anniversary celebration will find this book invaluable. They'll find practical help and personal stories, all of which keep firmly in mind that weddings are celebrations of love. The practical help includes checklists and timelines, budget worksheets, planning tips for food and flowers and much more. The personal stories are inspiring and varied, offering testimonials and suggestions for making a wedding day truly fulfilling. Great stories, real creativity.

Bridal magazines and wedding consultants can make readers forget what weddings are all about. *The Alternative*

Wedding Book helps readers put their own values and shared love back into the wedding picture.

— Rhonda Pigott, Northstone Books

The Breathing Book: Good Health and Vitality Through Essential Breath Work

By Donna Farhi

Widely known yoga instructor Donna Farhi offers a refreshingly simple and practical guide to reestablishing proper breathing techniques that can dramatically improve health, posture, outlook and insight. During infancy, most of us breathed with complete ease. Since then however, we have unconsciously altered our breathing in response to stress and other demands in our lives.

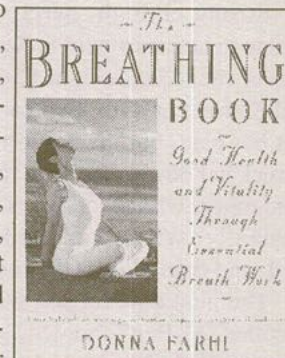
Rediscover the wonders and freedom of unrestricted breathing. In this accessible and comprehensive manual you will learn how to get in touch with your own lost natural breathing so that you can:

Develop effective strategies for using your breathing to relax your body in stressful situations and calm your mind during trying times.

Learn how to enhance your sexual pleasure, develop your concentration, and cultivate inner peace.

Use safe and easily learned techniques to treat asthma, depression, eating disorders, insomnia, pain, fatigue, headaches, and to quit smoking and a wide variety of other debilitating conditions.

With more than 75 photos and illustrations to illuminate concepts and make exercises clear, *The Breathing Book* is a long overdue tool chest—a thorough and inspiring program that you can



tailor to your specific needs.

Donna Farhi, who has been a Contributing Editor for *Yoga Journal*, is a registered movement therapist and yoga teacher who has taught around the world.

—Kolin Lymworth, *Banyen Books*

Gathering Medicine, Stories, Songs and Methods for Soul Retrieval

By Angeles Arrien

Angeles Arrien, author of *The Four Fold Way*, *Signs of Life* and *The Tarot Handbook*, has delivered a gem of a book-on-tape entitled *Gathering Medicine, Stories, Songs and Methods for Soul Retrieval*.

Filled with stories and reflective questions (When did you stop dancing?), this tape guides the listener in integrating inner and outer experiences. An anthropologist, Arrien draws on folk tales,

dreamwork and imagery, and can tell a story like no one I have ever heard. These tapes are inspiring, thought-provoking, entertaining and can assist anyone interested in traveling the Four-Fold Path of the ancients to find your personal truth: the way "back home."

—Penny Allport, *Serendipity's Backyard*

70 x 7, On The Spiritual Art of Forgiveness

By Joan Borysenko

Another jewel in the talking tape department is Joan Borysenko's latest tape set entitled *70 x 7, on the Spiritual Art of Forgiveness*. Borysenko, author of *Minding the Body*, *Mending the Mind*, *Fire in the Soul*, and *The Power of the Mind to Heal*

draws on the teachings of Jesus to show us that the spiritual principle of forgiveness is of great importance to not only our spiritual growth, but also to our physical and emotional health. I found her references to ancient numerological origins and historical examples very interesting and inspiring. She offers step-by-step meditations as a guide to assist us in our journey of forgiveness and compassion. A great listen for anyone wishing to experience profound changes in their own self-healing journey through this ancient and inevitable process.

—Penny Allport, *Serendipity's Backyard*

The Road Less Traveled &

Beyond: Spiritual Growth in an Age of Anxiety

By M. Scott Peck

The Road Less Traveled & Beyond is the third in a trilogy of books about M. Scott Peck's philosophy of belief. Peck is now sixty, and finds that it is time for him to put his house in order and tie up the loose ends of his life. This book is one of the results of that effort and is a distillation of Peck's wisdom as it has evolved from the early ideas of a thirty-nine-year-old therapist who was just beginning his own spiritual expedition.

There are three parts to *The Road Less Traveled & Beyond*. In Part One, "Crusade Against Simplism," Peck decries the primitive and effortless simplistic thinking that lies at the root of so much of personal and societal illness. He suggests that the big lie perpetrated by business, media and church is that we're supposed to be happy all the time, whereas "the truth is that our finest moments, more often than not, occur precisely when we are uncomfortable, when we're not feeling happy or fulfilled, when we are struggling and searching."

Part Two, "Wrestling With the Complexity of Everyday Life," is a portrait of the complex choices we must make and constantly remake if we are to live well with ourselves and others. Here are choices and paradoxes: choices of responsibility, submission, vocation, and emptiness; paradoxes of good and evil, human nature, and time and money.

In Part Three, "The Other Side of Complexity," we find Peck's view of where we might expect to arrive if and when we have paid all our emotional and intellectual dues. Here Peck offers his views on the "science" and the "poetry" of the Creator.

The Road Less Traveled & Beyond builds in depth and strength from the first chapter to a lyrical and poetic conclusion. In some ways, this is a slightly softer, gentler Scott Peck, but here, too, is profound psychological insight and deep spirituality, making this a highly worthwhile read.

—Jim Murray, *Murray Books*



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Menopause: From page 14

above enables them to wean themselves off synthetic hormones completely. Other women find that natural tonics enable them to dramatically reduce their dosages of synthetic hormones.

Dietary supplementation has also been shown to help many women. Dr. Richard Passwater, author of *The New Super-nutrition*, recommends women be sure to include in their daily regimen 400 to 800 international units of vitamin E; up to 600 milligrams (mg) of both calcium and magnesium; and up to 500 mg daily of L-tyrosine, an amino acid for helping fight depression.

Another very key nutrient to include in the diet is boron. Supplementation of 3 mg daily not only reduces calcium loss but also significantly boosts levels of the body's own estrogen, according to research from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Amazingly, the levels of estrogen in boron-supplemented women have been shown to be similar to those in women receiving estrogen therapy. Meanwhile, other health experts recommend avoiding dairy products since they, along with sugar and meat, seem to be most responsible for hot flashes.

David Steinman, M.A., is author of "Diet for a Poisoned Planet" and co-author of "The Safe Shopper's Bible." He can be reached at P.O. Box 97073, Washington, D.C. 20090.

T O F U R E C I P E

Pacific Rim Stirfry



Serves 4

1 - 454 g. pkg. Sunrise Medium Firm Tofu, well drained and cut into 1/2" cubes
2 tbsp. Vegetable Oil
1/4 cup Onion, chopped
2 tbsp. Black bean sauce
1 tsp. Fresh ground chili
1 tsp. Sesame oil
1 clove Garlic, chopped
1/2 cup Green and/or red peppers, chopped
2 tsp. Light soy sauce
1/4 cup Water
Cornstarch solution: 1 tbsp. Cornstarch
1 1/2 tbsp. Water

Heat vegetable oil in a wok or frying pan over medium heat. Add garlic and stir-fry until you begin to smell aroma. Add onion and peppers and stir fry for 30 seconds. Add Sunrise Tofu and continue to stir fry gently for 1-2 minutes until tofu is heated through (do not overcook). Add black bean sauce, soy sauce and ground chili. Mix well. Stir in 1/4 cup water. Add cornstarch solution to tofu and vegetable mixture, and bring to a boil. When sauce thickens, add sesame oil. Mix well and serve immediately.

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Health Canada Threatens Your Right To Choose Herbal Remedies

Legislation which limits peoples' right to take responsibility for their health is surely a step in the wrong direction.



In Canada, we believe we have the right to choose the type of health care which best suits us. This right is being rapidly eroded by Health Canada. Herbs and dietary supplements are being withdrawn from Health Food Stores. This is being done despite advice from Health Canada's Expert Advisory Committees and against the wishes of the Canadian public.

This could mean that you, the consumer, will not have access to the health care products of your choice.

- Herbal Medicines used by large numbers of Canadians are being withdrawn from sale, and placed on lists of herbs not allowed for sale over-the-counter. This is despite the recommendations of the Expert Advisory Committee who could find no reason to restrict their use.

- Licensing fees being levied by the Health Protection Branch, which became

effective January 1997, mean that small companies offering high-quality products will be put out of business. This will leave the production of herbs and supplements in the hands of the large manufacturers and pharmaceutical companies.

- Many herbs are now classified as drugs. This is because they have been scientifically proven to have a therapeutic action, not because they are unsafe for use.

- Health Canada have only two categories in which to classify herbs: as a food or as a drug. Herbs and supplements do not fit into either of these categories. A category of Botanicals needs to be created to deal with Herbal Medicines, making them available over-the-counter with adequate labelling.

- Many herbs will now require a prescription by a physician, and will be available only at much inflated prices. Herbalists and Naturopaths will be

unable to use these herbs in their practices. The reason for this is unclear as most of these herbs have shown no toxicity at all.

- Health Canada and Canada Customs are not allowing certain herbs into the country but will not issue a list of the herbs which are banned. This contradicts Canadian legislation drawn up by our elected representatives and raises serious civil rights issues.

- Naturopaths and Herbalists are no longer allowed to use herbs which they are trained and experienced in using. Large numbers of herbs in their dispensaries have been re-classified, rendering them illegal.

- These changes should not be confused with the United Nations Codex Alimentarius, which is also threatening to limit our health care choices. A German proposal before the UN will severely restrict Canadians' freedom to use herbs

and dietary supplements.

Herbal Medicines and Practitioners are legally recognised elsewhere in the world. It is time we make demands for Canada to be at the forefront of respecting peoples' right to the health care of their choosing. In this time of soaring health care costs and limited resources, legislation which limits peoples' right to take responsibility for their health is surely a step in the wrong direction.

Write to your MP, the Minister of Health, and Health Canada, ASAP. Ron Burke, Room 200, Health Protection Branch, Tunneys Pasture, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0L2; fax 613-941-3537. Minister of Health David Dingwall, House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6; fax 613-952-1154.

For more information, contact Roy Steward at Canadian Coalition for Health Freedom; telephone 604-988-1127.

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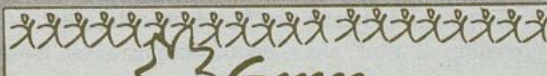
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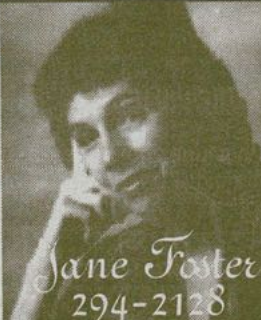


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I fastened it to a tree and left. About three weeks later a man contacted me and said he had found the remaining skis and poles and had brought them out.

This seemed to complete the episode, yet it still lingers in my mind. We proved to ourselves that we could survive. We all grew after that, maybe in different ways, but I think we became more optimistic and gained a greater appreciation for life. Most important of all, we are more active than ever in our outdoor pursuits. But the avalanche was nature's warning to us to never underestimate the potential of its power.

Author Scott Berry owns and runs an investment relations company in Calgary and actively pursues rockclimbing, iceclimbing, mountaineering and back-country skiing. Rene Spielmann, the "Rene" in this article, is the owner of Buckwheat's Bakeshop in Vancouver, and an avid outdoor enthusiast. Starting in

March, one percent of all Buckwheat's retail sales will be donated to Western Canada Wilderness Committee to help save the Stoltmann Wilderness (see related article this page). Buy an organic oat 'n fudge bar, save the Stoltmann forest!

*This article and the following commentary are excerpted from **Avalanche Accidents in Canada, Volume 4 (1984-1996)**, by Bruce Jamieson and Torsten Geldsetzer. Published by the Canadian Avalanche Association to promote avalanche safety and education, **Avalanche Accidents** is the most comprehensive book available on avalanche incidents, including fatalities and survivals, trends and patterns, terrain and route selection and safety measures. To contact the Canadian Avalanche Association: Box 2759, Revelstoke B.C., Canada, V0E 2S0; telephone 250-837-2435; fax 250-837-4624. For free e-mail information on the latest snowpack conditions from Vancouver to Calgary, check their website at <http://www.avalanche.ca/snow>.*

HOW THEY SURVIVED

The heavy snowfall, drifting snow and warming temperature, combined with the avalanche-prone terrain in the Bow Canyon, could have been the basis for turning around.

They were spaced out—about seventy metres from the first person to the last—when the one hundred and ten metre-wide avalanche released. Had they spaced further apart while crossing the avalanche slope above the canyon, only one person might have been caught.

All three skiers had the belts from their heavy packs buckled around their waists, and hands in their pole straps. This probably impaired at least one skier's struggle in the avalanche, causing his hands to be pinned behind him so he could not make

a space in front of his face or dig himself out.

They had non-releasable telemark bindings and their skis stayed on, making movement in the avalanche more difficult.

On the other hand, they:

1. Checked in with the warden service and obtained current information before starting.
2. Reviewed avalanche rescue prior to entering the canyon.
3. Spaced themselves apart while crossing avalanche slopes.
4. Effectively treated Rene for hypothermia.
5. Bivouacked in difficult conditions.
6. Kept their spirits up and successfully rescued themselves.

Randy Stoltmann

He fought for the environment and died tragically in an avalanche.

By Kerry Dawson and Joe Foy

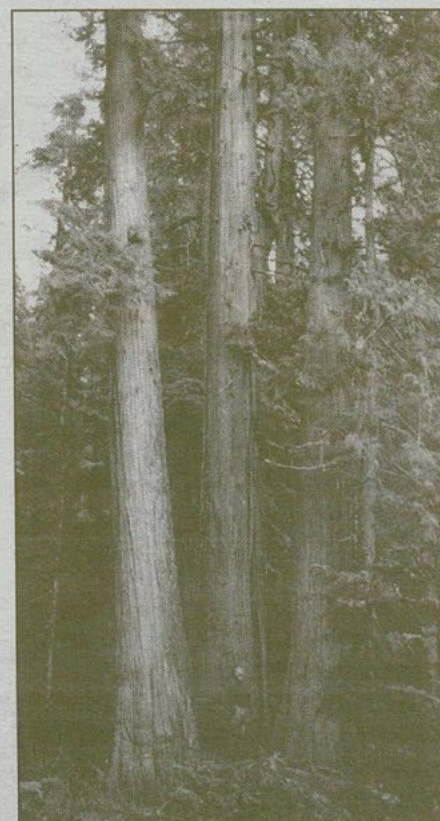
British Columbians are known around the world for our love of wilderness and our passion to protect it from industrial development. Wilderness preservation is part of our unique B.C. culture. The great effort made by so many people to preserve wild places like Stein Valley, Carmanah Valley and Clayoquot Sound is part of local folklore.

The Randy Stoltmann Wilderness, a 260,000-hectare expanse of ancient rainforest valleys, creeks, lakes and ice-capped mountains, is the cream of the remaining wildland of B.C.'s Lower Mainland. The area, situated just a three-hour drive north of Vancouver, was first proposed for protection in April 1994 by the late Randy Stoltmann, author, photographer, mountaineer and a tireless defender of wild places.

It was Randy's passion for the wilderness that took him in May 1994 to the glaciers and peaks above the Kitlope Valley. Near the end of his twenty-one day ski-mountaineering trip, Randy accidentally tripped and slid down a snow slope, triggering a freak avalanche that swept him off a cliff to his tragic death. He was thirty-one years old.

Randy's thoughts, beliefs and actions live on in the hearts of friends and fellow conservationists who have taken up the fight to save the entire 260,000-hectare Randy Stoltmann Wilderness Area from impending clearcut logging.

Leading the way, in the best B.C. wilderness-defending tradition, is Western Canada Wilderness Committee. If you



Three ancient red cedar trees in the Elaho Valley, part of the Stoltmann Wilderness. Photographer: Kerry Dawson.

would like to help out, you can phone the Wilderness Committee at 683-8220. International Forest Products is expected to try to begin logging the Stoltmann Wilderness this Spring, so phone today!

Kerry Dawson and Joe Foy are the Wilderness Committee's Stoltmann Wilderness campaigners.

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TRASH CANDU

Unsafe At Any Depth

By David Orchard

It was from Washington we learned Canada was about to accept U.S. nuclear waste. Scrambling, Ottawa confirmed plans to "test burn" a shipment of U.S. plutonium on a Candu reactor.

"Canada has stepped up to the fore and is prepared to take its responsibility for the greater peace of mankind," said Federal Environment Minister Sergio Marchi.

The U.S. Department of Energy acknowledged the Candu is untested at "burning" plutonium but added: "There may be less public resistance than in the United States." That half the plutonium would still exist after being "burned," and that the waste would become Canada's responsibility, was downplayed.

High-level nuclear waste, the by-product of nuclear power reactors and nuclear weapons, contains some of the most deadly poisons known. Some will remain so for a million years. For example, plutonium, an entirely man-made substance, is created only in nuclear reactors, and a minute speck in the lung (invisible to the eye) is enough to cause cancer.

Once we were told the nuclear waste problem could be "solved" by firing the waste in rockets into space where it could burn for infinity. The Challenger explosion showed how quickly that could contaminate the globe.

For years, the nuclear industry dumped its waste in the ocean—"sea bed burial"—until television cameras captured the act. Then "sub-seabed disposal"—burials in canisters just under the ocean floor—was put forward as the "best solution" possible. Finally, in 1996, an outraged public forced global prohibition of dumping waste in or under the ocean.

The latest "safe" solution is "deep geological disposal." The Federal Government, AECL and Ontario Hydro officials in tow, is currently holding hearings across Canada on the "safety and acceptability" of burying high-level nuclear waste containers deep underground.

The fact that no container could outlast its contents, that the waste will leak, that groundwater moves constantly (even through solid granite) and could thus carry this deadly cargo back to the surface and out of all human control—none of this has affected AECL's upbeat presentation before each hearing.

The U.S. spends about \$5.5 billion annually managing and trying to clean up its radioactive debris: fifty tonnes of plutonium from its nuclear weapons stockpile, thousands of tonnes of high-level reactor waste, plus more being produced each day in one hundred and ten nuclear reactors. This does not include plans to bring Russian nuclear weapons to the U.S. for dismantling and eventual shipment to

Canada for final disposal, if Canadians cooperate.

No state in the U.S. wants a high-level nuclear waste dump. The industry has tried many burial sites, including under the major aquifers of the Texas farmbelt. They were driven out by the citizens of each location. After \$2 billion was spent on Nevada's Yucca Mountain site, eighty per cent of that state says no, including its Governor and Senators.

Now the Canadian shield has become the "best location." Some commentators, parroting the industry line that "long-term disposal is needed," have declared that Saskatchewan (and presumably Ontario also) have an "ethical" responsibility to provide a site because nuclear waste wouldn't exist if we hadn't unearthed uranium in the first place.

So the residents of Saskatchewan, who have repeatedly elected a political party whose stated policy was to phase out uranium mining, or Canadians in general are now "responsible" for the waste produced by California reactors. Although nuclear waste is manmade, we're told it must go back from where it came.

Burying nuclear waste is a declaration of the failure of science. Dumping deadly toxins in the ocean, into the atmosphere or underground simply leaves unsuspecting future generations to cope with the inevitable catastrophic leakage.

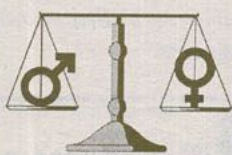
Burial is a political strategy. If the nuclear industry can present the public with a "solution" (out of sight, out of mind) to its most serious problem, then it can continue, and even expand, its production of lethal waste. Burial means precious little research will be done by the industry on neutralization, and nuclear powers from around the world will line up to dump their waste.

These nuclear scientist-politicians need to be told, No, you cannot bury these poisons. Go back to the drawing board and figure out how to neutralize the wastes you have created. After it is neutralized, i.e. rendered non-toxic, not simply "re-burned," then we can talk of disposal, not before. Until then, Canadian waste should be left, as it is now, on the reactor sites monitored twenty-four hours a day.

In the meantime, stop producing more. This means phasing the industry out. And it most emphatically means rejecting U.S. nuclear waste. The U.S. must solve its own problem. Canada has enough of its own.

David Orchard is the author of *The Fight for Canada: Four Centuries of Resistance to American Expansionism* (Stoddart, 1993) and chair of *Citizens Concerned About Free Trade*. He farms in Saskatchewan, and can be reached in Toronto: 416-466-0753 or 416-922-7867.

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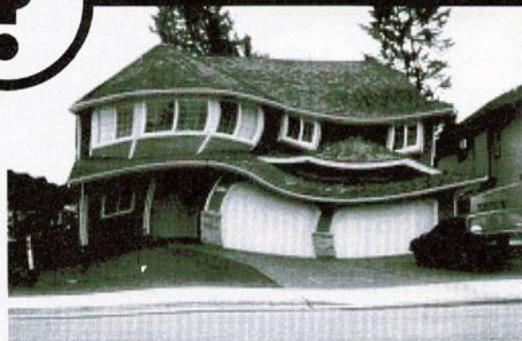
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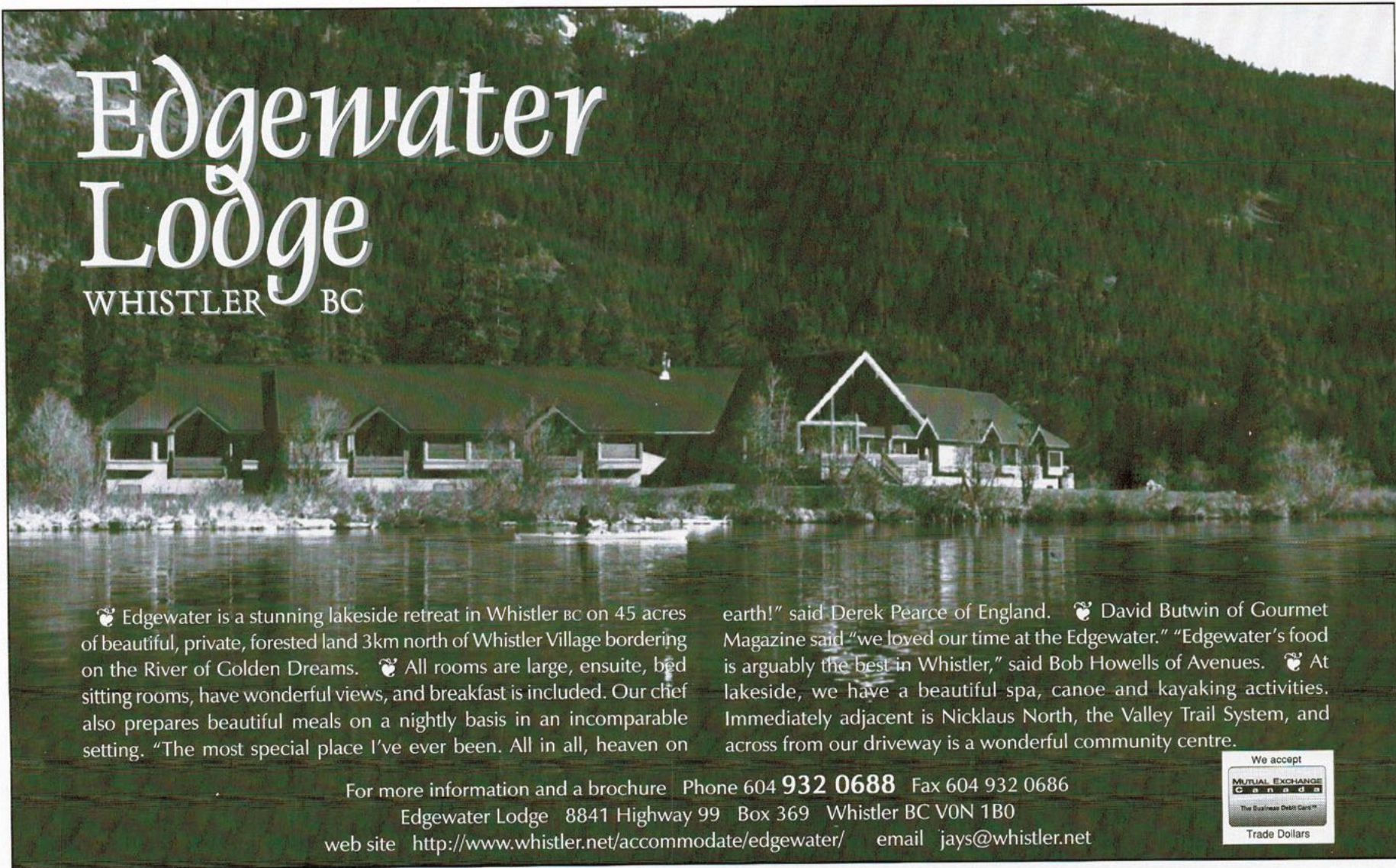
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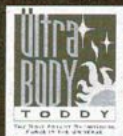




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